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**PARIS WAITS**

1914



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THE HERTFORD BRITISH HOSPITAL.

# PARIS WAITS

1914

BY

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11

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1915

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# PARIS WAITS

## PARIS DURING THE WAR

*August 8, 1914.*—The events, the emotions, the revelations, which have been packed into this first week in August 1914, will remain for ever with those who have been through them. When Germany declared war on France, Paris was indulging in dusty summer slackness and the tourists shared with the concierges the delights of the holiday season. But, on the issue of the order for general mobilisation, the whole country sprang to action with a gesture as graceful as it was orderly, and Paris put off her holiday garb for one of more martial appearance.

From the first moment, the mobilisation plans worked with clock-like regularity. The men obeyed their summons eagerly and the

women bravely seconded them. In a week, Paris has been stripped of her young men, and it is impossible to walk down any street or avenue in the city without feeling the sting of sudden tears, or that grip at the throat which is even more painful. Yet no men could have gone off in better spirits, and there have been few open demonstrations of grief from the women they have left behind. Both the highly and the lowly born have shown a most admirable self-control on all occasions. I saw to-day, a tall, slim man in the pale-blue uniform of a hussar regiment walking with his wife, his two children, and a nurse; he bent to say something to his wife, then caught his little girl by the hand and ran with her down the avenue, laughing gaily. The boy stayed with his mother and as I passed I caught a glimpse of the pain in the woman's face, and my own eyes grew dim. Another day I was on the Metro' and the carriage was full of little soldiers of the line on their way to the Gare de l'Est or the Gare du Nord. Each man had a group of relations and friends with him; wife

and children, mother and father, sweetheart and friends. They were all laughing and talking. The rare signs of distress came from the women, although now and then a man would begin kissing his child with passionate affection, or you would see a husband possess himself of his wife's hand and her lip would quiver as she returned his pressure. It was very painful, and even the poorest jokes were welcomed. I remember seeing a carriage full of people grow almost hysterical with laughter because an unmarried soldier with no belongings asked a married man with too many, whether he had brought the *armoire à glace*. It was not a brilliant effort, but it relieved the tension. All too often the last good-byes were but broken attempts at smiles, for not even love for *La France* could soften the pain of that last embrace. Yet how great that love is, no one can ever doubt who has seen the country mobilise.

All personal ambition, all personal grievances, have been swallowed up in that one great emotion, *La France!* Both the men and women have shown themselves eager

and willing to offer themselves to save their country from the danger of a second defeat by Germany, and all the threats of civil war, Socialistic influence, and hooliganism have been wiped out in the splendid rhythm of battle array. Jaurés, the Socialist leader, was shot in the back as he sat in a café, by a man who was out of his mind and whose mother had died in a lunatic asylum. There was nothing grandiose in a death like that; but it was followed immediately by a noble gesture from Hervé, his fellow leader, who at once asked to be allowed to join his regiment and headed his paper, *La Guerre Sociale*, with 'On a assassiné Jaurés, voir qu'on n'assassine pas la France.' The effect of this move from Hervé on the French Socialists was probably immense; at any rate, the whisper of civil war, which was already alarming the timid, was drowned in the cry of 'Vive la France!' and the singing of the 'Marseillaise.' Bands of young men paraded the boulevards waving flags and demonstrating their sympathy with the war; but there was no undue boasting, none of the madness which marked 1870, and in a very

few days the Government stopped all public expressions of enthusiasm except those which arose when a regiment went off to the front. Everywhere, by everyone, and in everything, the same splendid self-control is being shown, and the volatile Frenchman has proved himself a man of iron when the occasion demanded, even as the Frenchwoman has proved herself a steady help-mate to him in the hour of need.

English people in Paris during those first days of mobilisation went through some bad hours. Rumours came from home that England, in spite of the Triple Entente, might remain neutral. Pessimists whispered in our ears that the Government was determined to stand back until it saw its way more clearly, and French people began to look at us askance in the streets. Their eyes asked 'What are you going to do?' Their attitude was reserved, even a little defiant. Always, in the scraps of conversation which were wafted to one's ears from passing groups of people, through open windows, in cafés and from the *loges* of the concierges, came: 'Est-ce que les Anglais vont marcher?' 'Est-ce que

*l'Angleterre va nous trahir ?*' And one's own French friends asked the same questions. One woman went so far as to say: '*Est-ce que vous allez être perfide encore ?*' And even when Sir Edward Grey had spoken, these doubts remained for yet a day or two longer. News from England came in slowly, and once a seed of doubt is sown in a French heart it has to be thoroughly eradicated before its owner will allow that any attempt to uproot it has been made. '*Est-il vrai que l'Angleterre va marcher ?*' asked one man of me with obvious anxiety. 'Because they tell me that even now you can back out of it if you like.' Yet at that time our navy was known to be in the North Sea and our army was mobilising as fast as it could.

To say that the English people in France were glad when great head-lines in the morning papers announced to the French nation that England had declared war on Germany, does not give an idea of our relief. Not that England was at war, but that England was loyal to her friends and swift to punish the breakers of treaties and the invaders of

neutral territories. When the Union Jack waved side by side with the Tricolour and the Russian Eagle, and all France said 'loyal England' instead of 'perfidie Albion,' was a great moment to English people who know France and French people.

Personally, I hold many tributes from French friends to my country's loyalty, and they are among my most precious possessions. Letters written spontaneously when the news was announced hold expressions of affection and appreciation for England's fine gesture which must always be immeasurably dear to me. One friend writes : ' Certes, notre union, notre sang-froid sont admirables ; mais aussi la décision de la loyale Angleterre nous rend fiers et nous donne la plus absolue confiance dans la victoire.' Another, after telling me that her two sons, both married and with young families, were on the eastern frontier, says, ' I am glad that the Tricolour and the Union Jack are waving side by side. The one will give the other courage to fight and confidence in victory.' In the streets the populace showed the same quick appreciation ; and everywhere frank smiles, quick

gestures of politeness, were shown to English people. Workmen in the Metro' offered their seats, there was no pushing in the crowd, and rough women, of the type that sent their menkind away with a recommendation to use their fists if they lost their rifle and their bayonet, would smile kindly on an English girl and say 'Mademoiselle est anglaise, amie de la France.' And thereupon add another greengage to the pound already weighed. My own servant, a sturdy woman of the people, with a kind heart and a rude tongue when she likes, wept with joy when she knew that my country was fighting alongside her own and said naïvely, 'On est content avec l'Angleterre.'

Still further did the French people pay tribute to England's loyalty when they learned through Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith of Germany's clumsy duplicity, and the last sitting of the French Parliament after general mobilisation was ordered was memorable for many reasons, not the least being that it was then that M. Viviani, the *President du Conseil*, laid bare the despicable part that Germany had played in her

attempt to bribe England, and England's prompt refusal to have anything to do with her corruption. Men who were present at the last sitting came away deeply impressed. For the first time they had seen the French Chamber of one mind : Republicans, Royalists, Socialists, and these divided again into various degrees of each party's particular shade of opinion—all voted as one man for the war credits. They all stood to pay tribute to Jaurés, who had been quietly buried in the morning of that same day ; the bench on which he had been accustomed to sit was left vacant and many men in the Chamber recalled his eloquence in times past with sincere emotion ; those who shared the same ideas, and those who did not, alike remembered him with admiration.

The message of the President of the Republic, M. Poincaré, who came back from an official visit to Russia on the very eve of the war, was also received standing, and the house rose twice again on that day : once to do honour to gallant little Belgium, which was resisting with all her might the attacks of Germany on her frontier ; and

again to show its appreciation of England's loyalty and friendship to France. When the house adjourned *sine die*, many of the deputies joined their regiments at once, and others were prepared to do so when the order came. What a different scene from those which marked the Parliament of 1870! Then, ministers rose and fell with the culpable inconsequence of the day, and the few sane men who were forced to stand by and see them commit their follies bowed their heads in shame and humiliation. To-day, the men at the helm are less volatile and France is alertly awake to her own capabilities, and, let it be remembered, to the strength of the machine she has set out to break.

## INCIDENTS DURING THE MOBILISATION

*August 12, 1914.*—Side by side with the waving flags and the gay brave voices singing the ‘Marseillaise’ flows a strong current of pain. How could it be otherwise? All the vigorous manly life of France has been called to the colours, and the women are left, not ‘to weep and to wring their hands,’ but to do and to think for their families, to give what service they can to their country, and to bear, if God so wills it, the loss of all they hold most dear in the world.

There are no flags to help the women, no military music to cheer them, no splendid *entraînement* of *camaraderie*. But just hard dull routine, and the haunting dread of irreparable loss. All the more honour to them for taking up their burden so gaily, with such courage and with such determination

to make the best of things. Everywhere the fine spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice has been noticeable and only in the shadows of their eyes, or in the drawn look about their mouths, have their sufferings been obvious. It has been a revelation in human nature's possibility for heroic acts to see the French nation mobilise, and the brave attitude of the women will finely second the courageous deeds of the soldiers when the history of the war shall be written.

It is only since general mobilisation was ordered that we, of this generation, have realised the full meaning of conscription. We were accustomed to every man doing his two years (lately it has been three), and every year his twenty-eight or his twenty-one days. We agreed, more or less, that the discipline was good for him; and we thought very little more about it, unless it happened to interfere with any of our own personal plans. But when suddenly every man of one's acquaintance between the ages of eighteen and forty-eight is called up for service, the matter takes on quite another aspect. We are brought face to

face with the fact that 'service' may mean death, and that every man in France between those ages is called out to meet it, to take his chance and to take it at once. There is no choice for him or for the women to whom his life is precious. The rich and the poor, the high and the low—they must all go; for the army is a great social leveller and no respecter of persons as far as service goes. You go to lunch with a friend: three sons of the house are prepared to join their regiments—one is a cavalry officer, another is an officer of the line, and the third is a little *piou-piou*. The footman has already gone, the chauffeur goes to-morrow, and the concierge is waiting for his orders. On the way home, you look in at a quiet courtyard where one of the cleverest cabinet-makers in the world practises the art of mending old furniture in the leisurely fashion of all true artist-craftsmen. His sheds are closely shuttered, his tools are put away; for he, too, has gone to the war. In the evening, the maid brings a pair of shoes with: 'Madame, le cordonnier est parti, où faut-il que je donne les souliers de Madame à être raccommodés?'

Where, indeed? For the cobblers, too, must go to the front. With the breakfast-tray in the morning come clumsy pieces of bread instead of crisp and dainty rolls—the bakers are so scarce that the authorities have sent out the order that only *pain de ménage* is to be made. The doctors, the lawyers, the leaders of cotillions, the polo players, the tango dancers—they have all gone, or they are on the point of going. The actors, the musicians, the playwrights, the novelists, the journalists—every one who is young enough has joined his regiment, and those who are left behind are the ones who grumble.

In the streets there are no buses. Some are carrying stores to the front, some are lying idle on the Champ de Mars, waiting for orders to follow. The Metro' trains are rare and many of the ticket collectors are replaced by women. The trams, what few are still running, also have women conductors. The boulevards, the avenues, and streets show long deserted stretches where ordinarily the traffic is congested; and most of the private motors which still run fly the Tricolour or the Red Cross to show that they



THE AVENUE DE L'OPÉRA IN WAR TIME



THE DESERTED QUAIS



are commandeered. Fiacres and taxi-autos are still to be hired, but they are looked upon as luxuries rather than necessities in these days of economy and renunciation, and people who, a week ago, grumbled if they had to walk a quarter of a mile, now cheerfully trot the length of Paris rather than spend five francs on fares.

But of all the changes mobilisation has worked in Paris, none is more noticeable than the change in the manners of the Parisians; and whatever terrors war may bring in the coming days the memory of much that was pleasant during those days of preparation cannot be wiped out. Men are quick and kindly in their help to women and children women are tender and pitiful towards each other, and from class to class there runs a chord of sympathy which expresses itself in little gestures of courtesy such as we have not seen in Paris for many years. Every soldier in the army who has passed through Paris since August 2 has experienced the pleasant thrill of brotherhood as he marched through the crowded streets, and incidents grave and gay are not wanting as the days

go by and the mobilisation nears completion. Some men receive a shower of flowers from a pretty woman's hands, others have miniature flags thrust at them by children; and one soldier called to a woman of the people to give him the flag her baby was waving for luck, but the woman called back 'No, you will bring us a better than that.' Everywhere it is the same story of gaiety and eagerness for action on the part of the men; and on that of the women, a quiet acceptance of the responsibilities which are being left to them.

All that is simple and childlike in the Frenchman has been uppermost this week, and in nothing does he show these traits more obviously than in his attitude towards religion. It has so often been said that the Frenchman has no religion; but the Frenchman is like most other men, in time of great stress he turns to prayer. In a restaurant one evening, a group of ultra-Bohemian artists were giving a farewell dinner to a *camarade* who was to join his regiment on the following day, when some one reminded him that his regiment was likely to be one

of the first engaged in action. 'Bah!' was the quick retort, 'What do I care? I confessed this morning; so it doesn't matter what happens now.' No one of all that little company of dare-devils thought it odd that he should feel like that; moreover, it is a well-known fact that since the mobilisation order came, men have been in hundreds to confess before leaving for the front. 'Monsieur le Curé must help me with the prayers. I cannot remember much of my *Credo*, and I have quite forgotten my *Confiteor*; but that doesn't matter, does it, M. le Curé? What I want is to go away with a clean slate.' Many men have said more or less the same thing, and all have gone to the priest in the same spirit. There is nothing morbid about it, but just a childlike wish to go off with their hearts and souls washed clean, according to the lights and traditions of their race.

Another pretty incident of the mobilisation happened in a *crémèrie* at Montmartre where Willette, the painter, was drinking a bowl of chocolate with the help of a *croissant*. Quite by chance he heard a little *midinette* who was sitting near him tell some friends

that she had been to have her photograph taken for her future husband to carry with him to the front, and 'figurez-vous, mon petit, it is a complete failure! J'ai l'air tellement triste, tellement malade, that it will make him unhappy even to look at it, and there is no time to have another done!' She was so sad about it, so disappointed, and so pretty, that Willette, without a word, whipped out pencil and book and in half an hour produced the most charming portrait the heart of woman could desire, and it has now gone to the front, carefully guarded in the tunic of a little *piou-piou* whose wit is as keen as the fun of Tommy Atkins is infectious.

Less picturesque incidents of the last two weeks were those which showed us bands of rough men and boys going round the city with hatchets, destroying all property that was marked by a German name, or anything approaching a German name. During some hours a great deal of damage was done, and several people were hurt, but the police dealt summarily with the malefactors, and since all has been calm. As a result of this

momentary madness, however, every tradesman in Paris has run up a French flag above his doors and pasted on his shutters a legend to say what he is and where he is: 'Le patron est Français et a rejoint son régiment, ainsi que tout son personnel.' 'Le patron est à la frontière et laisse son magasin, sa femme et ses enfants sous la protection des citoyens de Paris.' Where the name over the shop is obviously German, the owner has put up his naturalisation papers as a proof of its right to be there, and a well-known dressmaker, whose partner was undoubtedly German, ingeniously covered the name-plate with patriotic flags, and put up a notice on the doors to say that the firm was French, and he himself was fighting for his country. A brave mattress-maker wrote on his door: 'DORMEZ EN PAIX. Le Matelassier est à la Frontière.' Another tradesman politely informed his clients that he was *à la frontière*, and regretted that he was unable, therefore, to receive them as usual. Here and there an old legend, dating from times of peace, states confidently that the shop will reopen in September. We doubt it, for each day's

news suggests that a long and painful struggle is before us.

Stories and proofs of the discourtesy and brutality of the Germans towards foreigners, wherever they come into contact with them, have caused the French people to rise up in their wrath and denounce them as savages and cowards. The men and women of the people very naturally draw no distinction between Germans and Germans, and it has been hard for more knowledgeable people to do so when courtesy has been wanting in high German quarters. The treatment of the French Ambassador in Berlin was unheard of. Not only was he unnecessarily sent home by Copenhagen; but before he was allowed to start at all, he was robbed, insulted, and made to pay for his own train in ready money, his banking account having already been confiscated by the German Government. The Dowager Empress of Russia was rudely prevented from returning to Russia, and was also despatched to Copenhagen. The Grand Duke and Grand Duchess Constantine were treated worse than emigrants; and as to consuls and their families, ordinary travellers

and people who had been residents in Germany, no indignity was spared them when they asked for their passports, and in many cases they have been made to suffer hunger and actual insults. On the frontiers, already, terrible stories are current of the German soldiers shooting down children, threatening peaceful citizens, firing on the Red Cross, and breaking the laws of war in every direction and on every occasion.

Before the German Ambassador in Paris received his passports the Parisians were tempted in every way to do him some violence. But France has herself well in hand, and the sight of Germany using the weapons and manners of savages has only made her more determined to prove her power of self-control. Nevertheless, it was trying for the Parisians to see M. de Schoen's luggage standing for nearly a week in the courtyard of the German Embassy, while he himself walked up and down outside the gates, inviting observation and, some people say, an attack on his person. It has also been said that M. de Schoen persisted in frequenting, with ostentation, the clubs of which he was a

member, thereby making it extremely uncomfortable for Frenchmen with whom he had for long been on friendly terms. A frigid politeness greeted him everywhere, and from no source did he receive the slightest cause for complaint. But not until the position was strained to breaking point did Germany recall her Ambassador, and men who knew him say that when he left he was greatly changed. Much of his self-confidence and high manner had disappeared, and on more than one occasion he is reported to have broken down completely. His departure was attended by the usual ceremony, and although it was conducted with funereal silence no courtesy was omitted that was officially due to an Ambassador. M. William Martin, the *chef du protocole*, was rigorously ceremonious throughout; but, instead of taking the hand that was offered to him by M. de Schoen, he bowed sternly and stood immovable to watch the Ambassador on to the platform and into his special train.

The leave-taking of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, Count Scezsen, took place some

days later; and that, too, was left until the patience of the French nation was almost at an end. The press grew sarcastic about the affection the Austrian Ambassador was showing for the delightful gardens of the historic Embassy in the Rue Vaneau, and repeatedly His Excellency was asked by the Government to explain his lingering. Finally, however, he received orders from Vienna to ask for his passports, about the delivery of which there was no delay. Once again M. William Martin was called upon to conduct the ceremony of an ambassadorial departure, and it must be said that Count Scezen showed more *savoir faire* in his leave-taking than Baron von Schoen; for he did at least have the politeness to send a telegram to the French Government, thanking it for its courtesy in providing for his comforts *en route*, a delicate attention the German Ambassador neglected to observe.

The social importance of the German and the Austro-Hungarian Ambassadors in Paris is such that their attitude and behaviour during this crisis has been much discussed. Their rank, officially and socially, their

splendid dwelling-places, their riches, are all of enormous influence in Parisian society; and the foreign diplomatic world, which is, perhaps, the leading social world in Paris, is all agog with gossip about the personalities round and about both embassies. The exclusiveness of the haughty Austrian aristocracy was only equalled by the powerful Prussian spirit which reigned at the German Embassy, and both were recognised as important factors in the land by the Parisians.

## FOREIGNERS IN PARIS DURING THE WAR

IT is now August 17, and in spite of the anxiety and tension which every one feels about what may be happening on the frontiers, life in Paris is subsiding into superficial calm. We are growing accustomed to martial law, to the complete suppression of all pleasures, to deserted streets, closed shops and the cutting down of every possible expense in our private lives. It seems almost natural that the cafés should be closed at 8 o'clock every evening, that most of the newspapers should be reduced to a single sheet, and that sheet filled solely with news about the war; news, moreover, that is told ten times over and then told again. For the *Ministère de la Guerre* has announced that no information from the seat of war will be forthcoming for several days.

The latest governmental measure in the interest of promoting order and quelling excitement in the city is the suppression of the sale of absinthe everywhere. The green fiend is thus a prisoner of war, and there are no open protests against her imprisonment. It is also forbidden that the public shall dine or drink their coffee sitting outside the restaurants. All tables and chairs are ordered to be taken from the pavements outside the cafés, and even the ornamental shrubs and plants have been put away and the streets look very shaven and shorn in consequence.

But no one dreams of rebellion, and a calm that is almost melancholy reigns everywhere. Ten days ago, the scene was very different. Then, all was confusion, orderly confusion as far as the military authorities were concerned, and even the Government seemed quite calm and pleased with itself. But with the public, especially the foreigners, it was a very different tale. The Parisians were undecided whether to go or stay, and the foreigners were busy getting their official papers which would allow them either to leave for home or to stay in France by

special permission. Men and women of all nationalities flocked to their embassies, their consulates, the police station of their particular quarter and to the stations for railway tickets. English, Americans, Austrians, Germans, Russians, Poles, Italians, Chinese, and Japanese, of all sorts, conditions, and ages, besieged the officials to know what they were to do and how they were to do it. Large printed notices set forth in curt terms how short was the time allotted for the necessary formalities to be gone through; and greatly did they alarm those who knew neither French nor the French people. Some people had money, some had none, and a great many had the wrong sort of money. Some wanted to stay, others to go, and a still greater number did not know what they wanted to do; but all, no matter what their wishes, had to stand in the streets outside the official buildings, through all weathers and for as long as eighteen hours and more, before their turn came to be questioned by one or other of those special specimens of humanity who sit in inferior official state, with authority to make 'crooked places straight' and the invariable habit of

making them more twisted than ever in an extremely unpleasant manner. Old men dropped from sheer fatigue, women fainted under the strain and stress of hunger and long standing, impatient men lost their tempers, and more than once very unpleasant quarrels happened between the crowds and the police, and among the crowds themselves; for they were made up of an extremely motley collection of men and women. On the Place de l'Italie the scene was one to be forgotten as quickly as one's nose and one's imagination would allow. All the degenerates of every race seemed to collect before that particular police station; and as they waited, hour after hour, day after day, for a week and more, their appearance and atmosphere became more and more unpleasant. They have now returned to their respective eyries in Paris, or to their own countries; but the memory of them still remains with some of us, and we still ask ourselves what part many of them would play should the revolution promised by the pessimists ever burst upon us.

In the richer quarters of the city the scene was rather that of a picnic than anything else,

but a picnic from which all the gaiety has been abstracted: well-dressed women sat moodily on boxes borrowed from a neighbouring grocer, and allowed themselves to be sustained with cakes and glasses of *syrop* and water, bought for them from the *patissier* next door by their husbands or sons. Others were fed by friends on the outside of the crowd who had already been given their papers; some went hungry all day long because they dared not lose their places and had no one to bring them anything. Men of all kinds waited and grumbled, raged, or remained silent—men whose names impress one in the big reviews—novelists, explorers, painters, illustrators; they were all in the same circumstances; and, according to their temperament and philosophy, so did they bear with the discomforts of the hour. Sudden friendships were born, unconsidered confidences were made and strong antagonisms were felt in those trying hours. A big Australian told of his happy experiences in England, an American lady related her adventures in many lands, an Englishman who had been decorated with the Legion of Honour put its value to

the test and was ushered in to receive his papers irrespective of other people's numbers, patience, or devotion. Another Englishman spent two hours interpreting for the convenience of a policeman and several people who could not speak or understand French, and by so doing lost his turn to go in for his own papers. 'But, . . .' he began. 'No use!' said the policeman for whose convenience he had been so busy. 'You have lost your turn, you must now go to the back of the crowd and see you don't do it a second time.' Such is the reward of virtue!

The wit of the officials who gave out, or withheld, the passports which allowed foreigners either to go or to stay in France during the war, had full play, even during the busiest days, and no thought of the weary waiting throngs outside would make any of these important persons hurry in the very least. They flourished their pens, twirled their moustaches and gave vent to their *bons mots* and their sarcasms with the utmost *sang-froid*. They retired for their meals with great regularity, and announced the fact personally to their waiting victims. Two



A BRITISH HEADQUARTERS



A GROUP OF FRENCH DRUMMERS AND BUGLERS



hours for luncheon and a pause for an occasional *aperitif* made pleasant intervals for them; but for the crowds outside in the drenching rain, or the burning sun (and we had both), they meant merely prolonged torture. To humiliate further the people they were supposed to be helping, these 'Jacks in office' took every opportunity to sharpen their own wits on the ignorance of foreign women both in the language and in the laws of the land, and their behaviour was all the more noticeable in that, elsewhere, politeness and courtesy are the invariable rule.

At the railway stations the confusion was even worse than at the consulates and police stations. All traffic, except for military purposes, was stopped or nearly so, and the most weird stories are told of people who slept in the stations and in the trains for several nights and days on end before leaving for England. The same weary waiting for tickets went on here as for passports at the consulates; and when, after a day or two of standing a ticket was bought, much time was spent in deciphering the written number on the back

of it, which indicated the one and only train for which it was available. No luggage except hand luggage was allowed, and that was limited; no tickets except third-class ones were of any use, as there was no distinction of class, and compartments intended to hold ten people frequently carried fifteen or nineteen. The journey to England took anything from fourteen to twenty-four hours, and the people who had not put Keating's powder in their hand-bags were very unhappy indeed during that time; for the trains were all old ones which had not been in service for many months, and they were in consequence very dusty and stuffy. All these things were uncomfortable, but they were not tragic; and although some people grumbled a little, the majority took everything quite cheerfully and found nothing but praise for the general organisation of the railway authorities and the politeness of the porters, who, in times of peace, are known to be somewhat lacking in that particular virtue.

Strenuous energy was also shown at the various homes, hostels, and clubs for English and American women in Paris during all

the early days of this month. They were overwhelmed by members, and people travelling through Switzerland and elsewhere, and the services they gave to helpless women and girls who suddenly became panic-stricken are countless and very valuable. They lodged and fed twice the number of people their houses were supposed to provide for, and they helped each distracted traveller to get through the formalities necessary for departure with a patience and courtesy it is impossible to praise too highly. There have been moments during these recent days when one has felt inclined to put patience, courtesy, and all the gentle arts of living, higher even than courage, energy, and brilliance; and certainly they stand higher than that terrible form of serving one's country which shows itself in pushing all things and every one aside so that a flag may be waved in a prominent position, indifferent to the fact that several people are suffering from the bruises and batterings they have received from this very energy.

## VERSAILLES DURING MOBILISATION

ARMED with special permission from the Commissaire de Police in our quarter, we went out to Versailles on a particularly beautiful August day to see the troops which were being formed for the front. We had heard that the scene was well worth seeing, and that the peaceful, summer place, with its air of past splendour, was now a busy military centre, bristling with martial law and army discipline.

The trams ran more frequently than the trains, so we went by tram: a long and jolting journey through dismal suburbs, more dismal than ever now, because so many of the shops are closed and so many of the factories are silent. All along the route we saw the women sitting at their doors and windows, sewing, while their children played at soldiers in the roadway. There was no sign of

excitement anywhere and most of the villas were closed, their gardens blooming in summer loveliness, with no one but the passers by to appreciate them. It was peaceful, sunny, and a little melancholy.

At Versailles, all was bustle and dust and military activity, just as we had heard. Many thousands of men have passed through the town on their way to the front since August 2; and already not a few have answered their last roll-call, while others have been sent home invalided. Recently, the men over forty had been mobilised and Versailles was full of *pères de familles* waiting to march away to that vague, mysterious, unknown land called the *frontière*. They were drilling in squads all down the broad avenue leading to the wide Place des Armes, dominated by the immense château and the imposing statue of Louis XIV., the *Roi Soleil*. Some were in uniform, some in mufti, some in a quaint combination of the two: military trousers which did not fit, civilian coat and waistcoat, and a kepi worn with anything but military smartness; a pair of spotless white trousers, neatly patched, a

red scarf round the waist, a workman's blue linen coat, fresh washed for the occasion, and just the kepi to give the soldierly note, knickerbockers and putties with a military tunic and an English travelling cap; and sometimes a perfectly neat civilian outfit with collar, gloves, and shining shoes.

The effect was a motley one and the men themselves were as oddly assorted as their clothes; workmen, tradesmen, professional men, artists, and dilettanti marched side by side in uneven lines to the sharp *un-deux, un-deux* of the sergeant. They stood to attention, they right-wheeled, they left-wheeled, and presented arms with an alertness that was as unexpected as it was admirable; for many of them had done no drill at all for several years. That their lines were ragged, their figures corpulent or clumsy, their heads bald or grizzled, and their walk none too supple, matters very little, for their *moral* is of the very best. Not a man among them but is glad to go to strike a blow for *la patrie*.

Little soldiers of the line in red trousers and long grey-blue overcoat; men of the

field artillery in white breeches, putties, khaki cotton tunic with gilt buttons, a flaming shell on the left arm, and a dark-blue fatigue cap; hussar officers in cherry-coloured breeches, high black boots, and pale-blue tunic; hundreds of men in fatigue dress of brown holland, with blue caps, were swarming all over the town. Officers of all grades and of many different regiments, on foot, mounted, and in motor-cars, shot out curt orders right and left. Boy scouts ran messages or drilled each other in little companies with a solemnity their fathers could never hope to reach; and old men, wearing the 1870 medal, looked on with watery eyes and vague memories of what had happened before.

All down one side of the Place des Armes and up a long avenue were the stables. Hundreds of horses stood waiting for their orders like the men; omnibus-horses, cart-horses, race-horses, ponies, useful cobs, well-groomed carriage-horses, and nearly all of them in good condition. Here and there a bony, unhappy-looking beast appeared extremely ill at ease among his plumper comrades and showed an ill-bred eagerness

to poke his nose into other horses' bags ; but, speaking generally, the class of horse commandeered was strong, useful, and fit for heavy work. The mules looked as obstinate as they are supposed to look, and the race-horses as delicately disdainful. The number of dapple and flea-bitten greys was noticeable, and almost invariably they were of the sturdy weight-carrying build. It was strange to see these patient, unquestioning animals munching hay where, as a rule, we had been accustomed to see men and women drinking *syrops* or sipping *apéritifs*, and to find that the blue-painted stalls bearing the inscription ' Afternoon Tea ' were turned into forage stores. It was inspiring to see the activity in the barrack yards of the Engineers and the Artillery, once known as the *Écuries du Roi* and *Écuries de la Reine*. Still more extraordinary was it to see the quiet greensward round the Swiss waters lively with baggage wagons, pontoons, and the continual coming and going of men, horses, and motors. And overlooking them all, the château where, forty-four years ago, the German Empire was proclaimed.

In the golden sunshine of the afternoon, standing among the brilliant flower-beds overlooking the Grand Canal, with the splendour of the château in the background, it was impossible to think of war. Everything was so calm, so beautiful, so dignified. The wood-pigeon's note sounded in the trees, the children laughed as they played with bucket and spade on the gravel walks, the women talked as they sat sewing, and the château completely screened away all noise and dust of the military camp in the town below. Even the aeroplanes, circling high in the blue of the sky, struck no unfamiliar note until you remembered that they were out on serious business; and to see a soldier of the line walking arm-in-arm with a woman was nothing new, only to-day the woman looked anxious and the man more protecting than usual. They were spending their last hour together before his regiment left for the front. He was to march out of the town as the sun set, with a bunch of green leaves stuck into the barrel of his rifle and his haversack on his back. There would be no music, no cheering, but silent

crowds would wish him luck, and the woman he was leaving would hug her baby very closely, so closely that it would cry, and in comforting her baby's pain her own would be a little lessened.

At 5 o'clock in the afternoon, military discipline was relaxed and the squads dispersed to eat their evening meal according to the possibilities or limitations of their purse. Some sat astride on the public benches and discussed the delicacies of the regimental *gamelle*, or lounged picnic-fashion on the dusty grass of the roadside. Some converted war material into a dining-table and seats; and others, with more money at their command, went to the restaurants and paid dearly for meals that were not too plentiful and not at all first-rate.

The good humour and patience of men of all ranks, during the trying days of waiting to be sent into action, cannot be too highly praised. Men who have to face financial ruin if the war lasts longer than four months are perfectly calm, even optimistic, and men whose health is already suffering from the sudden wrench from comfort and a

sedentary life are equally ready to leave the solution of their personal problems to fate. The spirit of the middle-aged man has been as gay and steady as that of the youngest and most enthusiastic, and the last days of the mobilisation were as full of confidence as the first.

*[By kind permission of the Proprietors  
of "The Times."]*

## A PICTURE OF PARIS

*August 21.*—Paris has stiffened her back to the rigorous necessities of martial law, and the attitude suits her well. She wears very few fine feathers in these days and her jewels are put away altogether. Her gardens bloom and her fountains play and the glory of the sunset gilds her domes and turns her river into a liquid stream of light. But there are no night-time revelries, and the poetry that is born of the fumes of absinthe is no longer written; for the cafés still close at 8 o'clock and the restaurants at 9.30. All the theatres are shut, not even a cinema is open. Music is never heard, either in private or in public, even children have set aside their scales, and students of singing their exercises. The museums are closely shuttered, and we know that many of the treasures of the Louvre have been safely

put away in iron or steel cases, so that if a German aeroplane should drop bombs there is every chance that they will not be injured. The streets are swept and patriotic flags wave from every window, and most of the shops are closed in the Rue de la Paix and along the boulevards. Big shops like the Printemps and the Bon Marché are open, but with a very much reduced staff of assistants. No motor-buses dash about the streets, no luxurious private cars, and even the taxi-autos and fiacres are rare in comparison to what we see in ordinary times. Heavy commercial traffic no longer exists, but military traffic is considerable and extremely swift. A notice has been put up that civil traffic is to give way before it, and we now slow down at all corners to avoid being crushed by some motor-car flying the Tricolour or the Union Jack and going at break-neck speed. All the private cars have been requisitioned for military service and great grey lorries, charged with food-stuffs, uniforms, wire netting, barbed wire, ammunition and every possible kind of war material, rush through Paris night and day.

The markets and the flower kiosks still brighten the boulevards, the fruit barrows and little flower wagons continue to tempt foot passengers to buy, but the gaiety and the mocking wit of the boulevard population have now turned to a quiet strained anxiety.

As far as actual material needs are concerned, we have little to grumble about. Food is plentiful and moderate in price, and fruit has never been cheaper or better. In the early days of the month we had something rather like a panic about provisions, as everybody recalled the stories of 1870 and prepared for a siege. The French housewives waited in hundreds outside the provision shops for many days on end, and the result was a shortness of all dry foods and preserves. It was not a pleasant sight to see; for many of the women were still red-eyed from saying good-bye to their menkind, and the shopmen were sometimes unable to make out their bills from sheer emotion and anxiety. 'You will excuse me, Madame,' said one man to me, 'but my son left last night and I have not slept, *c'est malheureux*, but I am incapable of adding up the simplest sum to-day!'

Poor man, his son was killed in his first action, and the last time I went by the shop all the women assistants were wearing mourning. The masses of stores which were collected in those first days of the war must still be lying in the cupboards of those who secured them at such pain of limb and with such wonderful patience. Certainly they have not been used; for half the people who bought so recklessly in their prudence are now flying away to the provinces, to England, or to America. One woman I know carried off her daughter and child and left her servant with a houseful of eatables. 'Ask your brother, the policeman, to come with his wife and family to help you eat up that great big ham,' said her mistress, 'and there is cheese enough to last you six months.' Other mistresses were less considerate and left both servants and dogs to fend as best they could, with disastrous results.

Money, also, was difficult to get in those early days, for there was as great a rush on the banks as there was on the provision shops, and crowds waited all day outside the bank buildings to pass before the *caisse* to

draw out what they could. Foreigners inundated American and British banks, clamouring for money to leave the country, and it was almost funny to see millionaires going about with enormous cheques which they could not change, and aggrieved expressions at being forced to walk or take the Metro' because their small change would not allow of them hiring a cab. Later on, when the paper money was issued, things righted themselves somewhat; but it is still difficult to get anything over a twenty-franc note changed in a restaurant, and for the first time I have seen an English sovereign fetch less than its face value: there were days when the exchange was as low as 21 francs 50 centimes.

People with children began to get very scared when milk supplies became limited, and the authorities were obliged to take the matter up seriously. For a week or two, only families with children were sure of getting any milk at all; and they had to register at the *mairie*, stating how many children there were and what were their ages. In some cases, the officials demanded to see the children, fearing that they were

being deceived. What was over of milk when the accredited people had been served was sold to those who got there first; but milkless tea and black coffee were the breakfast drinks of many of us for quite a lengthy period. We even boasted about it a little, thus proving that our hardships were not very grievous.

*August 28.*—Beyond the fact that English troops are being landed all along the northern coast of France we have had no news from the front for days. The *communiqués* tell us nothing; the rest of the paper, no matter what its name, is just ‘packing.’ Regularly, our household devours seven or eight papers a day, and if we read one of the seven we should be just as wise. In the morning, for breakfast, we search diligently through the *Echo de Paris*, the *Figaro*, and the *Matin*. At mid-day we buy *Paris Midi*, before that we study the *Daily Mail* and the *New York Herald*. In the afternoon we buy the *Temps* and sometimes we indulge in the *Liberté* and the *Intransigeant*. Whenever *The Times* or the *Morning Post* comes our way, we feel as if we had been talking to the General Staff,

until we realise that, after all, we are none the wiser as to the real way things are going. Then there are the rumours which come through the soldiers, the journalists, the ministries and the scaremongers. To tell a tithe of what we hear would fill a volume. But it is obvious that every one is getting more and more anxious every day, and there is even fear for the safety of Paris. 'Some one in the Ministry' advises a friend of his to leave Paris. 'Some one against the Government' hints darkly at treachery. The man who serves you with coffee berries mutters angrily that it is useless to provision yourself, for all Paris will be in the flames of revolutionary fire before another week has gone. A letter from England says that it is rumoured in London that the flower of the British Army is already 'wiped out.' How I have learned to hate that phrase since the war began! Then all at once we hear that the Belgian Government has retired from Brussels to Antwerp, and immediately afterwards we know that the Germans are in Brussels. Following sharply on this comes the burning of Louvain! And not only

Paris, but all the civilised world, stands aghast before such vandalism. Then come Malines and Termonde, and before we have hardly realised that the British Expeditionary Force is in France we learn that it has already suffered great loss in the fighting line and the great, decisive attack near Waterloo has failed. Just how and when we learned all these things in Paris I cannot say, for the great feature of our lives during these last weeks in August is our complete ignorance of the real state of the military position. Fact and rumour jostle each other from one end of the city to the other, and many strong-nerved men and women are put to the most severe test by the cross currents which sway their opinions and judgments backwards and forwards without leaving them a single *point d'appui* of which reason can be proud. Instinct is the only thing left to us in these days, and the men come off badly in consequence.

With every bad *communiqué* the nervousness of the population increases very rapidly, and in one day over 40,000 people left the city. They poured out in motor-cars and thronged the stations in search of trains.

The anxiety is particularly noticeable among the foreigners and bourgeoisie, and every day sees the residents in the richer quarters of the city closing their shutters and bidding their concierges good-bye. Mysterious rumours are, to a great extent, answerable for this state of things, and never has the old proverb about the danger of a little knowledge had better demonstrations. Everybody has a special source of information, and those which come from ministerial circles are all pessimistic. The advice is 'Leave Paris,' in the majority of cases, and the foreign embassies do all they can to persuade people to go. The American Embassy, in particular, has been besieged by inquiring subjects of the United States, and the patience and courtesy of the many officials are being severely taxed. 'You advise me to go, then?' 'Yes.' 'Then you think there is danger?' 'As to that, I should not care to say, but the Ambassador advises all people who are not obliged to stay, to go.' 'But if I stay, I shall be safe?' 'That I cannot be answerable for.' 'Then you think Paris will be bombarded?' By this time the unhappy attaché

or whatever he might be, is edging the lady to the door, and it is probably on account of such encounters that a notice has been put into the *New York Herald* to advise Americans 'for obvious reasons' to leave Paris as quickly as possible. Already the stampede has begun; and, as the French and English have received information of much the same kind, there is much confusion in the land and not a little terror.

In the working quarters of the city the scene is quite different. Every one is calm and no one thinks of moving. Very few people are in employment, and those who have no economies are obliged to live on the State grant of 1 franc 25 centimes a day, with 50 centimes extra for each child under sixteen. In the warm August weather the women sit at their doors and windows sewing patiently; the children play in the streets, where there is no traffic to speak of. The old men and boys lounge about reading the newspapers, or do odd jobs about the house, and the great event of the day is the publication of the evening papers. At five o'clock every one rushes to the boulevards in the hope of news.

In spite of their outward calm, however, the people, as well as the bourgeoisie, realise that things are not going well at the front, and there is not one among them but recalls the treachery of 1870 and fears that it may be the same this time. The panic sowers are getting very active and some of them are extremely dangerous. They sit in the wine shops and talk, they buttonhole people in the streets and whisper, they even hold forth on the box-seat of the cabs they drive, and we ourselves, on one occasion, were much reviled by other drivers because our cabman would insist on turning his back to his horse the better to address us with much eloquence and no sense on the subject of the war. He poured forth volumes of recrimination against every one in power, and accused all the world of treachery against France. 'You will see,' he said, 'in two weeks the Prussians will be in Paris. Already they are at Reims.' We scoffed at him. In the meantime, he nearly ran into several motor-cars, just failed to knock over two foot passengers, and missed by a hair's-breadth ever so many lamp-posts.

With so many excitable elements in our

midst, the situation is a nervous one, and no one realises the danger more than those steady women in the streets, who go about their daily tasks with such calmness and dignity. In their hearts they fear terribly for the husband who is fighting and for the children who are left in their charge; but they do not show it, and it is for that reason they have my most profound admiration. They will scarcely speak of the war, although they devour the daily papers, and to all inquiries as to what they think, they answer: 'Qu'est-ce que vous voulez? If they come, they come!' And they go on with their stitching, calmly, but not very hopefully.

In the midst of all this anxiety and mystery the papers have suddenly woken up all Paris to something like excitement by announcing that there are great governmental changes. A National Defence Government has been formed, and the Military Governor has been changed. M. Millerand is Minister of War, M. Briand is Minister of Justice, and M. Delcassé is Minister of Foreign Affairs. In place of General Michel, as Governor of Paris, we now have General Gallieni. The

uninitiated are extremely surprised and not a little alarmed at this sudden announcement; and the rumours which follow on its heels of the dangers we have all been running, and may still run, are not reassuring. Apparently, neither General Michel nor M. Messimy were the best men for the posts, but we are assured that General Gallieni and M. Millerand will soon strengthen all the weak points. As to the Government in general! Well, we all know what every one always thinks of the Government, no matter what it happens to be. Moreover, M. Caillaux is said to be dictating even now, and there are stories going round which declare him to be Paymaster-General of the Forces. It is all very uncomfortable and nerve-racking, and that we are walking on very thin ice seems the only fact about which we can be positive.

The immediate result of General Gallieni's appointment as Governor of Paris is the suppression of all special newspaper editions and the order that no paper is to be cried in the streets. The difference this order has made to the life of the city is extraordinary. We have been for so long accustomed to the

false excitement of those raucous cries, '*La Patrie!*' '*La Presse!*' and a dozen others, that not to hear them is as remarkable as not to hear the crashing of the motor-buses and the rushing of traffic in general. No longer do we see those peculiarly alarming men rushing along the streets with their loads of papers and their harsh voices. In their places, we have all sorts of quaint newspaper sellers: small boys, little girls, gentle old women and pretty young ones. A few of the irrepressible spirits have found ways of drawing special notice to their particular paper by writing the name in large letters and sticking it in their caps. Others sing in low tones, 'Will you buy my paper, the name of which I am not allowed to cry?' A patient, silver-haired old woman moans pathetically, '*La Guerre Sociale!*'—and a nice little boy offers you *Le Bonnet Rouge* much as he might ask you to tell him the story of Red Riding Hood. Newspaper selling is, indeed, almost a gentle art under General Gallieni's stern rule.

Undoubtedly, we are passing through curious times in Paris, and occasionally we

realise it, in spite of much that is apparently normal. A certain amount of business goes on, the charities are very active, the weather is glorious and the food is plentiful and cheap. It would be delightful to wander about the gardens and parks if our minds were less anxious, and the long, broad, silent avenues are pleasant places in which to loiter in the twilight. Every evening brings us a sunset that is more beautiful than the last, and the nights fall 'as a benediction.'

Yet, for all our outward calm, we are most unhappy about the future of Paris. Anxiety is mounting to a flood; and, with every new move from the military authorities or the Government, the entire population lifts its head in alarm. Rumours of very unpleasant things come from the front, and the emphasis with which the writers of articles in the daily papers implore us to have confidence, patience, and calm begins to irritate us. The only consolation we have is the invariable report that the nearer you get to the fighting line the more cheerful is the outlook. All the soldiers are confident and in good spirits, and the idea of anything but victory

never enters their heads, or if it does, they certainly never let it find expression in words.

Further consolation came to us with the public announcement of the new treaty between the Allies, which was a security against peace being concluded with Germany unless agreed upon by all three Powers. But then, as we sighed with relief at the present precaution, we shivered in thinking of the dangers which had necessitated it. The fantastic stories which grew up round the making of that treaty were worthy of the hour in which they were born. No wild invention was too wild to be believed, and what General Joffre had threatened, what Lord Kitchener had sworn, what Sir John French had affirmed, and what politicians of evil repute had failed to achieve, made up a volume of sensational literature suggestive of a cinema drama. Moreover, we did not yet know if Paris was to be defended or not in case of a German advance, everything hung uncomfortably in the balance, and we were the helpless spectators who, at any moment, might be forced into active members of the struggle or unwillingly passive victims of Prussian brutality.

## SUSPENSE

THE last Sunday in August was one of those particularly golden summer days when Nature seems to throw out her beauties with an almost too generous hand. In the early morning, Paris was a symphony of blue and silver mists, which later on unfolded into golden splendour. The way out to St. Germain-en-Laye showed the river and surrounding hills in all their rich and peaceful beauty, and as the train crossed the three bridges before climbing the steep hill which leads to the grey old town, a series of delightful pictures was discovered to us. Grey houses clustering along the river banks, gardens glowing with summer flowers, peaceful meadows, vine-clad terraces and, brooding over all, the wooded hills already touched with autumn gold. Everything seemed to breathe of a beauty so intense that it was

almost painful, for behind it all came the question : ' Will it soon be a scene of desolation instead of peace ? ' It is that question at the back of our minds which makes us look at every familiar object in and around Paris with a touch of pain and a great increase of affection in these days. Up in the old provincial town, with its château, its church, its historic houses, and its countless memories of Royal France, the same spirit of anxiety which prevails in Paris was found to prevail there. Very few people walked down the cool green alleys of the woods, the terrace was almost deserted, the blue distances sang their harmonies to an unobservant population, and Paris lay before them with something ominously mysterious in her landmarks. The sun touched Sacré-Cœur into a gleaming, opal-like beauty, the Eiffel tower took on an almost human meaning as a receiver of news from the scene of war, Mont Valérien frowned with an air of comfortable strength ; but is it as strong as it looks, and will it stand against those terrible German siege guns ? The test is, perhaps, to come ; but in the meantime all is peace.

Just at the foot of the terraced hill, on a quiet reach of the Seine, lie a string of barges, immobile, waiting, with the heights of Marly and the aqueduct of Louveciennes rising in the background. Hidden among the woods are several little forts and away behind them all is the entrenched camp of Paris, which has a circumference of 145 kilometres and the strength of which, when fortified by our armies, is estimated as sufficient to hold the enemy back from Paris. It is only within the last two days or so that we have seriously considered the invasion of Paris. For a month and more, every one has said, 'They will not see Paris this time.' But we are not so sure now, and once again the Parisians have to face the possibilities of a siege and the probability of an attack.

Only this morning General Gallieni sent out an order to the effect that all people living within the dangerous zone of the forts must be prepared to evacuate their houses at an hour's notice and the inhabitants of St. Germain are already moving into Paris or going to further fields of safety. It is sad



RED CROSS BARGES ON THE SEINE



AT HUIRON ON THE MARNE



to think that the stately little town may be bombarded, that its charming old-world houses may be destroyed, that the ugly church, in which lies the tomb of James Stuart, may be burnt and that the château may go with the rest. The woods, the terrace, the broad parterre, are all familiar paths to us; and our hearts sink as we turn our backs on them and on our own particular dwelling—a small white house standing in a walled garden, shaded by beautiful trees, and at present gay with flowers. It is a painful moment to close the garden door behind us, to leave our field-spaniel, Jimmie, in the care of a forest guard; and still more painful is it to listen to our humble neighbours whose faces are grave with anxiety for those they have sent to fight and for those who remain at home. There is not a father or mother who is not haunted by alarming tales of Belgian atrocities, and many are planning to take their children to places of safety, even if they themselves come back to face what may happen, as many of them must. The older people in the town remember 1870, and it was one of them who told us that although

the Prussians did no harm to the town, they levied a heavy tax on the inhabitants and demanded that it should be paid within twenty-four hours.

When we got back to Paris in the evening, after a journey of one hour and a half instead of the usual thirty-five minutes, we heard that a German aeroplane had flown over the city and had dropped two bombs, neither of which had done any harm, and at the same time, a written message, signed by a lieutenant of the German army, telling the Parisians they had nothing to do but surrender as they, the Germans, were at the gates. His Prussian pride must have been distinctly hurt to see how little effect his bombs and his insolence had on the Parisian population. People were curious to see the hole in the street which the bomb had made, and in the evening it was visited by crowds of interested spectators. Otherwise, no notice was taken of the event ; and on the boulevards, between seven and eight, people were sitting on the terraces quite calmly, discussing the evening papers and the incident of the bombs. No official news had come through, but there were

many rumours and none of them were good. 'We are going to have an interesting time now,' said a newspaper man, and a French playwright at once told us stories of the charming life that some people led during the siege of 1870. 'In those days we grew used to bombs. I was a small boy; but I can remember how the women used to pick them up and how, as they stood in lines waiting for their daily rations, they watched expectantly and without any fear, for the falling of the shells round about them. Believe me, Madame,' he said, turning to me, 'you will be as well in Paris as anywhere else, even if there should be a siege.' And I believed him.

Under all the persiflage, however, there was a note of acute anxiety, and men who were usually calm and indifferent showed signs of nervous excitement. The steady advance of the enemy, the obstinate silence of the War Office, the rumours, General Gallieni's orders to the inhabitants of the surrounding neighbourhood that they were to evacuate their dwellings and the bomb-throwing episode, were all disquieting factors, and in spite of the

one ray of light which came from every one who has been near the front, that 'the armies were confident and full of good spirits,' pessimism was gradually mounting in many hearts. The German strength took on enormous proportions and there were hints that things were not going well with us in many ways. Quarrels in the administrations, traitors among the military staff, political intrigues (of course), and even *une histoire de femme*! Spies loomed large before our eyes. They marched alongside our men in khaki, they positively swarmed the hospitals as doctors and nurses, and who knew but what they were hobnobbing with the General Staff! When pessimism reigns, it is more optimistic than optimism itself; for nothing is impossible in its eyes and it believes almost anything, so long as that anything tends towards the line upon which it is basing its miserable theories.

On Monday, things were even worse, for we were told that the Government was leaving for Bordeaux, that the Banque de France had gone; and, in the afternoon, came yet another avion, who threw us three or four

bombs and was received with a brisk cannon-ading from the Eiffel Tower as well as rifle shots from soldiers in the town. A slight panic occurred near the Opera and the Gare St. Lazare, but of such short duration that it was hardly realised before it ended; and at Passy, where I happened to be sitting in a quiet, shady garden, drinking afternoon tea with some French friends, the whole thing was treated much as if it had been a sportive event prearranged for the amusement of the suburbs. From every window heads appeared to watch the curly-tailed Taube on its way; and the quiet streets were thronged with people rushing to an open space from which the wide sweep of sky round the Eiffel Tower is fully commanded. At certain moments it looked as if the machine had been hit, and there were cries that it was falling; but alas! it sailed away quite happily towards the north, and we watched it with extreme annoyance but small emotion. The only irritation that was shown was towards the authorities, who had not sent out French machines to keep the insolent visitor away. Already Notre-Dame had been aimed at, the Opera,

the Gare St. Lazare, and the Gare du Nord ! 'Where are our *aviateurs* ?' was a question everyone asked. And the answer came very promptly the next day, for the sky gleamed with four or five armed machines all ready to meet the German should he appear in sight. But he has not come near Paris again, and we hope he will not be allowed to now. 'L'heure des Bombes,' or 'L'heure des Taubes,' as it was called at once by the Parisians, was a very short-lived, perilous pleasure, and one we were not sorry to dispense with ; for it was discovered that at least one woman had been killed and several were wounded, either by the bombs or by the bullets of those who shot at the machine from the streets.

The three worst days of the week were Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday ; and they were depressing beyond words. The bourgeoisie and the foreigners became thoroughly alarmed, and the authorities encouraged every one to leave precipitately. To describe the confusion of those days is beyond me. Hurried packings, clamouring crowds for motor-cars at any price, to take whole families to the coast, to Bordeaux, to anywhere as

far away from the Prussian hordes as possible. Thousands waited hours for tickets at the railway stations for Havre, or for the south; and, as fast as people poured out of the city, others poured in from the surrounding neighbourhood, in the fulfilment of General Gallieni's orders. There were moments when a dreadful desire to laugh came over one, it seemed so inconsistent to see the exodus and the advent going on at the same time, and for the same reason. All were seeking safety from the enemy, and yet some were coming and others were going.

'The Germans will be in the city in three days' was what one heard on all sides, and 'the city is not going to be defended' was another affirmation. Yet, in the same breath, some one else declared that the bombardment was going to be fearful; and lurid pictures of fire, murder, and sudden death were drawn by imaginative minds. Most of us felt unhappy in our hearts for a few days and it is not surprising that everyone who could, and who had no duties to tie them to Paris, should leave it as quickly as possible, especially those who had children and who had money

with which to fly. But to watch the flight was not an encouraging sight for those who were forced to stay behind, and there was something a little grim in the faces of the working population of the city as it helped to send away the very people upon whom it depended for its very existence. 'Ah, vous êtes toujours là,' said a fruit-seller to a friend of ours. 'Je pensais que tous les gens bien étaient partis!'

The discomforts of getting away were extreme, and it was pitiful to see the children and old people standing for hours and hours waiting for their trains and then, when the trains arrived, to see them carried along in a mad rush for the carriages. What the journey, no matter where to, must have been to many, it is painful to think; for not only was it three times longer than in ordinary times, but the heat and overcrowding of the carriages must have been appalling. Marvels of quick packing were achieved in those days; for many people who had lived in Paris for years started for America within a notice of three hours, and English people with families were known to be ready within an

hour after the decision to go had been made. French people departed with the same rapidity and by every imaginable mode of transport, from a motor-car and a train to a *bateau parisien* and a bicycle. The diligent, far-seeing business-man who can seize his opportunities must have made quite a small fortune during those days; for people were ready to pay anything to get away. Three thousand francs for a motor-car to go to Touraine was nothing; and £10 to sail down the Seine to Havre, providing your own food and hotel expenses on the way, was considered a mere bagatelle, even by people of very moderate means. There was something very fascinating about that flight in the *bateau parisien*. The little pleasure-boat looked so important in its new rôle, and the surroundings were so peaceful. The sunny river, the smiling city, the lazy lapping of the little waves against the banks, and the passengers waiting on deck with none of the bustle and dustiness of the airless railway stations which tend equally to depress the spirits of those who are leaving and of those who are being left behind. Luggage was piled in the middle

of the boat and passengers sat round on the wooden seats as if they were off to St. Cloud ; so they were, but the journey did not end there. They would sail down past Sèvres, Suresnes, St. Germain, and on for thirty-six hours. The journey must have been extremely trying, and the last boat was attended by some nerve-racking moments. Not far from Rouen it was stated there were Uhlans in the neighbourhood, and for a time the boat was held up under a bridge that was mined. The passengers on board did not feel happy, and some were very scared ; but nothing further happened, and they finally reached Rouen in safety. The discomforts of the stations were of a still more gloomy kind, and I shall never forget the tired, scared faces, the dirty trains, the crowds, the confusion, and the smells. One train was bombarded by *apaches* as it was about to leave the station. They swarmed all over it, and nothing could dislodge them ; so eventually the train went off with them sitting on the steps, the roof, and the buffers, crowding every carriage, and as determined as they were numerous. Thus loaded, it crawled

from Paris to Lyons, stopping at every station *en route*, and at every stop more passengers tried to get in. The misery of that journey is still a nightmare to many who were forced to make it.

On Wednesday, the Government went to Bordeaux; and directly after its departure General Gallieni made his proclamation that he was going to defend Paris. The relief of every one who remained, when the proclamation was made public, seemed a little inadequate when one examined the defences and heard the opinions as to the strength of the forts; but for the pride of the nation it was impossible even to think of allowing the Germans to walk into Paris without a protest. Moreover, General Gallieni counted on holding out for at least fifteen days, and there was always the factor of the armies. Some men said that they, not the guns, were our firmest grounds for hope in holding out. 'There will be house-to-house fighting,' said one man, and another declared that the very women would take up arms if it came to that. Many wild things were uttered in those days and wilder dreams were dreamed, but nothing desperate

was done. We simply sat and talked and waited, feeling very isolated and a little dreary ; but for each other's sakes we kept cheerful countenances. Stories from the suburbs came in to keep our fears alive, and stories from the front came in to feed our hopes that things were not as black as they were painted. From Maisons-Laffitte we heard that Uhlans had been seen at Pontoise and the Gare d'Achères had been destroyed. Every one was fleeing fast from all the neighbourhood and even the *Croix Rouge* had departed. From Versailles, from St. Germain, from Chantilly, from everywhere, the well-to-do-world had fled.

People ride out on bicycles at the risk of being arrested and come back with the story that they have seen a battle at Senlis. Others describe the German occupation of Compiègne. Every hour we feel the danger growing, and we watch the defence preparations with interest. Trenches are being dug about the city gates, trees are being felled to strew the roads, barbed wire is being stretched along all railings and *chevaux de frise* bristle in many directions. Guns are to be mounted

on the fortifications and we gaze at the old fortress of Vincennes doubtfully but hopefully, and speculate as to the possibilities of Mont Valérien for holding out against German guns.

It is all very unreal, because alongside these warlike preparations the peaceful life of the citizens goes on unmoved. The women of the working population cook and clean and sew, look after their children, and send their men off to the daily routine, wherever they are lucky enough to have any men to send. The women employees of the Metro' punch the tickets with expedition and the *marchande de quatre saisons* cries her *belles poires* with a voice as steady and sonorous as ever. There is no excitement anywhere, and in the Avenue des Champs Elysées there are still enough babies to keep the Punch and Judy show going; and the woman who takes the pennies for the chairs on the footpaths still insists upon 20 centimes for an arm-chair and 10 centimes for a chair without arms. In the Bois itself, the cattle graze thousands strong, and sheep in equal numbers 'stop as they crop' on the lawns of

Bagatelle. Barges of good, sweet-smelling hay lie waiting down the Seine for their consumption, and whichever way one turns are proofs of the splendid measures which have been put into force in case of a siege. We shall certainly not want food for many months. To-day, we filled up our *carnet de ménage*, by which we shall be entitled to certain rations when the time shall come to have them dealt out; but that time has not yet come. We shall have to fetch them, and we shall have to make them fit our needs. They may not be just what we like, but they will be sufficient to keep us healthy. It is wonderful what a fine digestive powder is real hunger! At least so the soldiers tell us, for they are the only ones who have experienced it yet.

The extraordinary calm of the city under the test of imminent investment, under the trial of an exodus that was almost a panic, under the test of pessimistic rumours and no official news that can be called good, is simply marvellous. Wherever one goes among the working people's quarters—and there, it must be remembered, no one has moved—there is no sign of disorder. Even if the

city had been sacked, even if it be yet sacked, burned, or invested peacefully, the 'people' must stand steady or cause yet greater disaster. That it will stand, and very steadily, there is very little doubt and to its attitude the whole civilised world will pay tribute. It is, indeed, impossible to pay a tribute that is high enough to the working population of Paris; for in spite of all the rumours, all the scares, all the reports of German atrocities in Belgium, it has never wavered from its steady stand and its magnificent calm. I have wandered about almost all over the city, and I have talked with all sorts and conditions of men and women; and although I have listened to the most appalling stories of treachery in the army, treachery in the Government, treachery everywhere, I have never heard one soul among them flinch before the task of standing steady in the place where they happen to be. With the women one would say it is a case of having suffered so much, of still suffering so much, at the thought of their men who are out there fighting, that nothing very much matters. They live with the soldiers and for their own skins they have no fear. For

their children, yes, but the Parisienne of the Faubourg is capable of fighting for her children, even against a German soldier at bay. They have no fear, and they have a touch of disdain. One is glad to have lived alongside such heroism and to have learned something from it oneself.

As the days go by, a wave of optimism is rising, there are even hints from the War Office that things are going well at the front ; and all our cheerful rumours, which last week seemed so vain, are this week gaining ground. One night, as we were going to call on a lonely friend, we ran across newly arrived Algerian troops and we stood to watch them for an hour. They had a tremendous reception from the people. Cries of 'Bring us back William's head !' rang all down the boulevards, and promises were not wanting. 'William' will need to have a legion of heads if the Turcos do all they say they are going to do. They were a gay dare-devil crowd, not disciplined troops. They marched in loose order, and to watch them in the mass as they swept by was like watching the swinging movement of a wave. The mules, with their delicate

legs, carried the mitrailleuses, and the splendid cloak of a spahi flung a splash of colour among the holland overalls with baggy legs which formed the uniform of the men. Now and then, when they were forced to halt to let a tram go by, the café keepers and the crowd would bring them refreshments, and the women would thrust flowers and fruit into their hands. The excitement ran high, and now and then the officers had to interfere with the merrymaking to prevent it from getting out of bounds. The march past went on all through the night, and on the following night more troops went by. We are told that reinforcements are coming from all directions, from Africa, from England, from India, and from all corners of France. In Paris, we have the Marines, and outside Paris we have the *Armée de Paris*, which, according to all accounts, is increasing in volume every day, almost every hour, and our hopes rise as their numbers swell.

## A RESPITE

AFTER the suspense of the first week in September, when every day seemed to bring the invasion of Paris nearer and rumour made cowards of us all, there came a reaction. The enemy's terrific march was stayed, and the battle of the Marne ended in the Allies pushing back the German lines to the Aisne. There, as I write, the Germans are making a stand which, we are told, may be a long one. The violence of the fighting both on the Marne and now on the Aisne is being demonstrated to us by the wounded who are being brought into the Paris hospitals. Terrible stories are told by men who come direct from the fighting line, and visions of that awful battle-field are with all of us night and day. The German losses are said to be heavier than ours, but we are taught to believe only part of all we hear about the

diminishing strength of Germany. The Imperial Guard has been 'wiped out' three times already, and on three different occasions! The starving German soldiers are, alas! all too capable of resistance; and even if their rifle shooting be inferior to ours, it is not of any great moment as long as they can do so much damage with their big guns. On the other hand, men come back with stories that the French have no more ammunition, that everywhere we are outnumbered, that the Russians are being beaten all along the line, and so on for ever! It is more consoling to hear the soldiers, ill and weary though they are; for they are neither foolishly optimistic nor depressingly pessimistic. They mean to win, and they do not reason how or why. It is something they have to do at no matter what cost, and words are not going to help much.

I never realised how ill men could be from sheer fatigue until I saw a Seaforth Highlander and a Rifle Brigade man utterly prostrate in a French hospital after that awful retreat on Paris. They had marched 25 miles a day during four days, with practically

nothing to eat and fighting all the way. The Highlander had been five years in India and had seen a good deal of active service on the frontier, but he frankly owned that he had never seen anything approaching the recent fighting in Belgium and Northern France. Both men spoke in the highest terms of the Belgians, and only wished that they had been able to march as lightly: 'A bandolier and a rifle, that's all they carry, it's nothing to what we have!' They had been in hospital ten days when we found them, and they were still unable to stand on their feet, although, beyond fatigue, there was nothing the matter with them. They craved food, rest, and forgetfulness of all they had seen. Their pity for the Belgian refugees was very real, and whatever English soldier you meet it is always the same: they will never forget those heart-rending scenes of mutilated women and children, burning villages, and roads streaming with frightened groups of human beings seeking safety by walking away from their own dwellings into the unknown. Above all, they will never forget or forgive the Germans for driving

the women and children before their guns as protection for themselves against the fire of the Allies. Even the laconic Highlander talked about that, and the Rifle Brigade man became eloquent. When we asked them what they would like as a little addition to hospital fare, both men asked for jam or cake; and we could not keep back a smile, for it has grown into a joke with our French friends that the English soldier must have his pot of jam and his tea or he can't fight.

In the early days of the war we found that the English soldiers were very glad to have visitors, especially when they were in French hospitals; but as the time went on and the English Red Cross took over the management of the English wounded, visitors, haphazard ones at any rate, were superfluous. The men neither needed them nor appreciated them. The nurses and their own friends saw to it that they had all they wanted and gifts could always be left at the door of the hospital. But in the early days, when only the Hertford British Hospital was in full working order, and Paris was empty of all the *gros bonnets*, there was plenty to be done in the way of

hospital visiting. Tommy is clever enough to get all he wants without knowing any French, when he is strong and well—the language of gesture even amuses him ; but when he is ill, he prefers to ask for what he wants in his own language, and he was relieved beyond measure to find himself in an English hospital, being nursed by English nurses and treated by English doctors. That the hospital was open at that particular time is something to be thankful for ; and it is entirely due to the energy and insistence of the hospital doctors and the chaplain, that it was not closed in the first days of the scare.

The committee had decided to send the nursing staff to England, and preparations were being made for a general dispersion, when the doctors and the chaplain demanded that the hospital should not only remain open, but that its accommodation should be increased ; with the result that since then it has held the honourable position of being the head hospital of the British Red Cross in Paris—a position it was certainly indicated to take when one remembers that it was practically born out of the events of 1870. Sir



CHOOSING WAR POSTCARDS



CONVALESCENTS IN THE HERTFORD BRITISH HOSPITAL



Richard Wallace, whose work for France in 1870 is well known, built it and endowed it for the use of the English poor ; and it is only as a result of litigation that it is now less richly endowed and unable to march with the times, in supplying the English poor in Paris with all they need. In times of peace it is not allowed to receive subscriptions, but in time of war this rule has been relaxed ; otherwise it could have been but of little use to the British soldier, whose needs, when he is ill, are great. The matron could tell you what an appetite he has, and how her house-keeping books have gone up in consequence ; and we all know what calls must have been made on the surgical stores, the linen-room, and pharmacy.

In a suburban hospital of the *Dames Françaises*, one of three divisions of the French Red Cross, we found among many wounded, all of whom were quietly cheerful, two Englishmen, one a man of the Royal Flying Corps, suffering from dysentery, and the other a man of the Cheshires, who had half his cheek blown off. In his dry north-country way he told us how ingloriously it

happened. He had been through Mons, Le Cateau, and the battle of the Marne. He had seen his officers and comrades fall all round him, and he had escaped from a hundred dangers without a scratch. But when, after the enemy had been turned back, he was given a day's leave, and had spent it sight-seeing in Paris, he nearly lost his life in the most stupid way imaginable. He was sitting in a café, resting his chin on the muzzle of his rifle, his fingers playing with the trigger, when the thing went off and took with it half his cheek. How or why the rifle was loaded, he could not explain. To the end of his days he will have a crooked smile and a scar, but otherwise he has come off easily, and he was well on the way to getting better when we saw him. The Flying Corps man had also seen some hard service, boy though he looked. He was the chief mechanic of a unit, and everything about him expressed dexterity and despatch, allied to the most splendid courage. They are fine expressions of our race, these flying men, and as that slim boy told his story he infected us all with his own enthusiasm for the art of war. He told us how, on one

occasion, he had to fix a new engine to a machine within the minimum time allowed for such an operation. 'How long will it take you?' asked the officer. 'Three hours, sir.' 'Then you'll just do it. The enemy should be here by then. Save the car as well, if you can, and remember that the bridge you have to cross at — is to be blown up at a given time.' With one eye on a ridge on the opposite side of the valley, over which the German cavalry would appear, our boy worked with his men. It was a nervous moment; but nerves in the Flying Corps do not seem to hamper action, for it was not until the machine had flown away, and the boy with his last man beside him was turning his car at full speed round a fork in the road, that he saw German cavalry descending on them. He tried to turn the car in the direction of another road; and in doing so the clutch jammed, and they were held up. Two revolver shots laid low the Uhlán officer; and the car, as cars will sometimes, pulled itself together and they set off at top speed, followed by a rain of German bullets which whistled all round, but never touched them. It was a case of flying

from the devil to fall perhaps into a deep river ; for if the bridge should be already blown up, they were done. But the bridge was not blown up until a second or so after the car was on the right side of it. What the men did when they were once in the English lines, I do not know ; but when the boy reached that point of his story, I heaved one of the deepest sighs of relief I have ever heaved in my life. ‘ I do hope you won’t have any more tight corners like that,’ I said sincerely, but foolishly, in my womanish way, and I was duly snubbed for my incapacity to understand that, to the Flying Corps, tight corners are the breath of life

*September 21.*—We heard to-day that Reims cathedral had been bombarded and destroyed by the Germans. All Paris is stupefied at the news, and to-morrow the whole world will stand aghast before such vandalism. We are still aflame at the Belgian atrocities and the burning of Louvain ; Malines and Termonde are fresh in our minds, with the still more inhuman crimes committed on women, children, and old men. Now there is the burning of Reims to add to the list ;

and with it, much loss of human life and destruction of private property. The first brief account of this crime was given in last night's *communiqué*, but it is only this morning that we know the full extent of the damage. The very printed words seem to halt before our eyes as we read them. It seems as if they hesitate to convey to us all they mean. Wherever one goes in Paris to-day, consternation and revolt are to be read on the faces of men and women, for the destruction of Reims cathedral is to each one of them a personal disaster. The world may mourn it as a universal loss, but France mourns it as an irreparable disaster. Only M. Maurice Barrès seems to have struck a note of hope into French hearts by saying: 'They may destroy our cathedrals, but they will never destroy the spirit which caused them to be built.'

*September 23.*—The infamous way in which the Germans have behaved in Reims is now described in detail and none of their excuses for their vandalism is worth consideration. To say that the cathedral towers were used as posts of observation and that guns were placed

in the tower is absurd. They have said the same thing about every village belfry they have destroyed in France, and they have been proved wrong. They have excused their murdering and plundering by calling it self-defence—self-defence for the Kaiser's army against women and children! In Reims, they put up a notice to say that any citizen resenting in any way German authority would be hanged in front of the cathedral. We have heard terrible stories of people saving themselves from their burning houses and of the roads round the city being crowded with refugees. It is the same awful tale as has been told throughout Belgium. Here, as elsewhere, the German soldiers are said to have drunk heavily, and in their drunkenness they have rioted and pillaged. But strangest of all are the spy stories that have been disclosed. Apparently Reims was a nest of spies, and cement-beds for the big German guns were ready everywhere. Underground tunnels have been found for secret communications to be made from the centre of the city to the outskirts, wireless installations have been discovered; and, to be brief, there was

nothing about Reims that was worth knowing that the Germans did not know. They had their knowledge from their spies, who were acknowledged as good citizens of Reims, hidden under the disguise of almost any nationality but the proper one.

‘What would they have done in Paris?’ is a question often asked in these days, and the pessimist retorts, ‘What will they do in Paris even now?’ But pessimists are not in favour just now, and while the Government is at Bordeaux and the bourgeoisie remains wherever it happens to be, Paris is fairly free from discouraging opinions in spite of Reims. Optimists are nice people to live with, we find, and our most confirmed optimists are, of course, the soldiers—the men who come in from the front, wounded or sick. I was visiting a French friend the other day, and after we had exhausted ourselves in saying just what we felt about modern warfare, we were diverted by the arrival of a very pretty and very witty Frenchwoman, who had just come back from the provinces, where she had been spending two weeks with her husband and her brother, both of whom were in the

same hospital, one wounded, the other ill. '*Ils sont épatants,*' was her first comment. 'Never have I seen them so gay. My husband has lost half his foot and my brother looks a gaunt wreck; yet to hear them talk you would think they had been away on a holiday, and they are dying to get back. My husband certainly won't be fit for a long time, but my brother will.' Everyone was amazed at the account of her brother, for he was well known to be one of the most neurasthenic of Parisians. Nothing pleased him for more than five minutes, and he spent his days in grumbling, taking scented baths, dabbling in the arts, and trying on new clothes. 'You should see him now. He refuses to shave, he thinks baths are superfluous, and we had to have a private dining-room in the hotel when he left the hospital because he refused to use a knife and fork. He says they complicate existence, and he told his wife she did too. *C'est épatant,* because, you understand, if he has to go back, it is much better that he should go feeling like that. He will be safer and we shall be less unhappy.' Charming person, and such a delightful point

of view! French, and of the very best! There are moments when I think she has no equal, this gay and courageous Parisienne!

Another rare personality which is making itself felt in the war is that of an Englishwoman I know who, at the first call to arms, joined the French Red Cross and set about preparing herself for useful hospital work. She was like the workmen, she dropped her tools—for in times of peace she makes beautiful etchings and dreams beautiful dreams—and she went off to the war. For some weeks she was in Brussels and her impressions of the Belgians came to me in a letter written a week before the Germans occupied the city. ‘The Belgians are most *sympathiques*. Just at the gate of our new hospital is a café where the soldiers come to refresh themselves. They are the gayest of people. Rushing in all dusty and untidy, they fling off their heavy knapsacks and in five seconds are deep in a strange card game, at which about twenty can play. Then, in half an hour, off they go again. These, of course, are the *garde civique* who protect the city, how I don’t know, since it isn’t fortified.

Yesterday, a German aeroplane flew over the town and caused a certain excitement, but not very much. One gets accustomed to everything. We all stood by, obviously to catch a bomb and put it in water before it touched the ground (isn't that the correct treatment of bombs?). But none came, a delicacy which one does not expect from a German.'

When the Germans marched into Brussels my friend stood to watch them for hours, and for days she listened to the rattle and rumble of their guns going by. She says that she was forcibly and unpleasantly impressed by the splendour and strength of that great army. It was then in all its pride, scarcely touched by the struggle and purposely displayed to impress. The magnificent uniforms, the fine horses, the extremely aggressive attitude of the officers (this was most noticeable) combined to give the impression of unbreakable power, backed up, as they were, by uncountable numbers. The people of Brussels silently watched them pass. Hour after hour they marched past and the hearts of those who watched must have been heavy. There was no manifestation of any kind.

Only once did the nerves of the people break and that was in an unexpected way. Suddenly, a German officer gave the word for the goose step, and as the men broke into this fantastic exhibition, the irrepressible Belgians broke into fits of merriment. They laughed till they cried, they rolled on the ground, they held their sides, and nothing would stop them. After such a strain as they had experienced before, the reaction was necessarily violent.

As the days went on and the nursing of German wounded grew monotonous, my friend decided to return to Paris if she could. She was tired of observing German regulations and of avoiding hurting their many susceptibilities. Her patients were not *sympathiques* like the Belgians. They went to bed with their guns, and insisted that their nurses should taste whatever food was brought to them before they could be persuaded to put it to their lips. They were heavy, dull, uninteresting, suspicious people, with shaven heads covered with 'ignominious bumps.' Besides, she wanted to nurse French or English soldiers, not Germans. So she began to

make her preparations to leave. Her first trouble was with the Red Cross authorities, who strongly objected to her attitude and who would take no responsibilities for her safety should she decide to go. Another recreant member of the society also broke the chains and went away. This left my friend more than ever alone; and not possessing the characteristics of the ant, she had recklessly spent her money in the early days and was getting to the end of her stock of gold and silver. A visit to the American Legation soon revealed to her that officialdom was of no use to her. She was very curtly told that they could neither wire to Paris nor to London for money for her; they were philosophical about her starving, in the way people have of being philosophical about other people's troubles. Her only friends were six Belgian ladies who kept a tea shop, her peasant landlady, and the soldier son of that same good creature. Every day her little stock of money grew less, although she strenuously checked her appetite with strong and very cheap cigarettes. She was advised to go to the German governor to ask for a pass

for Ostend, but he said 'No,' Ostend and Antwerp were just the two places to which he could not give passes. So she left him. Then she was advised by the old ladies at the tea shop to go to Cook's manager, who, although no longer acting openly, was ready to give advice. To her surprise this official saw her at once, and was apparently ready to do all he could. He advised her to leave by simply walking out of the town early in the morning. At that time, there were comparatively few Germans in the town, and he suggested that she should find out which gates were in Belgian hands so that she might pass through easily. 'You will then have to walk to Ostend, and if you get there safely let me know and I will send others.' The idea appealed to her and she went home to count up her money, only to find that even if she got to Ostend she had not enough to pay her passage over to England. This meant that she must use an introduction she had to a lady whom she believed to be still in the city, and ask her to lend her the necessary extra money with which to get to England. The experience was not a pleasant

one, and with a solid banking account of her own it seemed absurd ; but banking accounts in those circumstances were of little avail. So, with a desperation born of necessity, she set out to beg for the first time in her life. The lady was not in ; twice the same message was sent out to her, and if it had been given a third time I believe she would have been in Brussels now ; for begging, even under the best of conditions, is an unpleasant occupation. However, Fate was really kind, and she might have borrowed a fortune had she needed it. After saying good-bye to the six old ladies at the tea shop, all of whom were keenly interested in her and anxious for her safety, she went back to her lodgings and paid her very modest bill to the landlady, who also showed great interest in her proceedings and sent her son to discuss with her the best roads to follow. He discouraged the idea of her attempting to go at all and advised her to wait for a problematic train talked about at the American Legation. But with a map and an umbrella she set off on the following morning at three o'clock, taking care to pass through a gate guarded by

Belgians. Once outside the gates she had to consult her map; but she soon found that her guides would have to be the floods and the German shrapnel, both of which she was forced to dodge. She managed to get several 'lifts' from peasants, and only in one instance could she persuade the driver of the cart to take any money. She was English, and that was enough to ensure her the kindest of treatment from a Belgian. At night, she slept in a farm-house inn and with the first hint of dawn she set out again. As she walked quickly along, a great voice hailed her from behind with 'Aren't you English?' 'I am!' 'Then I guess you are doing the same as I am, trying to get out!' After that she had a companion in a young American student who, as he said, was doing the same as she was, trying to get out. They had very little trouble after that as they were within Belgian lines, and eventually they got to Ostend and from there to England, where my friend collected material as quickly as possible and came back to Paris just in time to find the city filling up with wounded from the battle of the Marne.

## FRENCH IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLAND

IT is not often that we can take any real pleasure in seeing ourselves as others see us ; but just now English people are being treated kindly by the gods, and in France particularly we are *très bien vus*. There are some French people who still maintain a certain defiance, of course, because we are, after all, historical enemies ; and now and then the inherent suspicion of the race crops up in a little crisp sentence, or a witty sarcasm, before which we are so often helpless and mute, the ready retort not being ours. Nevertheless, we are in favour just now, and it is very pleasant. Moreover, we feel that we deserve to be ; for the heavy task we have undertaken we are doing with all our might.

Perhaps, of all English names, it is that of Kitchener which carries the most weight in

France, and if he has a rival it is Sir Edward Grey. Both men are quoted with conviction, and they stand for all that is strongest and best in our nation. If the shadow of a doubt ever crosses a French mind about England standing firm, trite sentences of Lord Kitchener are recalled to the memory, and the doubt disperses. If any fear of diplomatic and political machinery disturbs the French trust in our future dealings with European Powers, the famous White Paper is again cited, and tranquillity reigns. It is really a most excellent thing for England to want the friendship of France, because, to get it and keep it, she will have to live up to a most amazingly high standard. The slightest mistake, the faintest suggestion of frailty, and France rises in alarm. If England expects every man to do his duty, France expects every Englishman to do two men's duty. It is a great compliment to us, but it is not an easy matter to fulfil the mission.

When the King's message to the Army was published in the French newspapers it was voted to be fitting and dignified; but when Lord Kitchener's soldierly admonition

was printed, it left all France wondering. It was so short, so curt, so very much to the point, that it took away every one's breath. They remembered Cromwell and every puritanical tradition in our history. The papers told the most wonderful tales about the piety of English soldiers ; and whenever the people see a soldier who has forgotten Lord Kitchener's recommendation to avoid temptation they shake their heads and feel that they run the risk of losing a very pleasant illusion. It is always disconcerting to find how child-like the French people are in spite of their keen, critical, logical minds. They know quite well that the English soldier is a man like the rest of men, that he will probably do his best to follow Lord Kitchener's advice, but that he is a saint and a confirmed abstainer they do not believe. Yet, for all that, they like to think that he carries a Bible and can claim Saint Anthony as his patron saint.

But the things by which the English soldier will be most remembered in France are quite everyday, unimportant matters.

French people of this generation will tell their children that he likes tea and drinks it all day long, that he almost lives on jam and biscuits, and that his chief recreation is not sport but shaving. Nothing has struck the public so much as these few characteristics in the English soldier. His cleanliness, his tidiness, and his domestic habits are much more talked about than his bravery or his fine soldierly attributes. These, however, will be appreciated after the war, when the history is told by those who fought in it. His gaiety, *sang-froid*, and habit of singing are also much commented upon; and it was said that when things were going rather badly with the Allies, the English soldiers never stopped singing. They sang before the battles and directly after them—some even sang while they were fighting. ‘Whenever you hear singing and laughter, you may be sure it is the English Army,’ said a Frenchman of my acquaintance, ‘and the greater the difficulty the louder the singing.’

It took a long time (using long as one measures time during the war) before the

French people could believe that we could put an army of any account into the field at all; and although, in comparison to the French Army, ours is but a small force, we are proud to know that it has done well and will go on doing well—a point upon which we have quite convinced the French. They laugh with us over the German Emperor's hackneyed phrase concerning General French's 'contemptible little army,' and, for the moment, the valour of the Expeditionary Force has eclipsed the splendour of the Navy with the populace. In fact, the great rôle which the Navy has already played in this war has not yet been recognised by anyone in France; and the funny suggestions that the uninitiated have made, as a little something for the Navy to do, have proved it over and over again.

Politics have, of course, been swallowed up in war, and the great speeches made at the beginning of the campaign are already things of the past. But, at the time, they caused immense enthusiasm, especially those by Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Asquith, and Lord Kitchener. It would be almost safe to say that those three speeches went far to wipe

out of French minds many of the lamentable scenes about which they have read as taking place in our Houses of Parliament during the last year or two, and in like manner we have forgotten the Caillaux trial; for if party politics fail to express England, so do *causes célèbres* fail to express France. I asked a Frenchwoman the other day why a nation so sound, and a race so spirited, as hers could sit down calmly under such obviously corrupt politicians and such an amazingly corrupt jurisdiction. She told me that the secret of it all lay in the fact that the Frenchman did not really care a bit about anything but the well-being of his own family in times of peace. When things got dangerous for the country, well, he was there; but in the meantime he had his own affairs to look after and he could not be bothered with politics. He talked about them, railed against them, wrote about them, but he never did anything. Whether he will after the war, when, from all we hear now, there is to be such a series of political disclosures and such a cleansing of the *couloirs* as never was heard of, remains to be seen. For the country's sake it is to

be profoundly hoped that the right men will be at the helm, otherwise France will set off on another journey down a pudding-bag lane. We have only to read what Paris was like in 1870 to see that in 1914 the picture was much the same when the war broke out.

If there is one thing wanting in the Englishman to make him more popular than he is in France at the present time, with the women at any rate, it is that he should become Roman Catholic. It bothers many of the lower orders to think that we are of 'the same religion as the Germans,' and whenever they see an English soldier observing the rites of the Roman Church they are immensely relieved. It brings us nearer to them, especially just now, when there is an important revival of religious fervour in the country. It is useless to try to explain our various creeds to a French mind; and not to be a Roman Catholic is sufficient to say that you must be either a Lutheran or an atheist—anyway, you are a heretic. A dear old priest, who has suffered much in this war, and whose parishioners have suffered more, would, I believe, give his life willingly if he could

convert twenty Englishmen to his faith; and when he blesses us, as he often does—for the English have played a good part in the saving of his district—the tears come into his eyes, and it must be with a feeling of sadness that he turns away from us, believing us lost to salvation.

The remarkable rapidity with which our war credits have been voted has made many French people open their eyes in astonishment; and our generosity, both public and private, has been spoken of admiringly by those who know of it. But the country, as a whole, has no idea to what extent England is giving. It reads that the public funds are swelling with money and gifts to the soldiers; but it does not in the least realise what the country is doing for the Belgian refugees, and an English lady who lives in France, during a brief visit to England a few days ago, was much struck with the kindness and hospitality of the quite poor people towards that sorely tried nation. ‘How rich England must be that she can give so largely!’ is what some people say over here; but it is well-known that France is richer, only she is less

impulsive in her charities, if not less generous, and her first instinct is to begin them at home and end them there, unless she can see some very good reason for doing otherwise.

A further surprise to France is the magnificent way in which India, Canada, and the Colonies have come forward to help the Mother Country. For so long French people have been taught to believe that our power was waning throughout the Empire, that loyalty at such a moment was the last thing they expected. The seditions of India (many of which were hatched in Paris), the independent spirit of Canada, the hostility of South Africa, were all gospels they accepted, and our reputation for tyranny in our Colonies was as much a tradition in France as that of our reputation for being above all a practical people with a wonderful eye for the main chance. They have never understood that we could conquer and yet not tyrannise; but we may hope that many such little misunderstandings will be cleared away by this war, and, as a consolation for the suffering it is causing, the two friendly nations may arrive

at a better understanding of each other's qualities.

To illustrate, very slightly, the strange opinions of the home-keeping French people, I can recall many conversations I once had with a brilliant and talkative old French lady. Nothing pleased her so much as to dish up for me the most spicy concoctions on the national sins of my country, which, she assured me, were mitigated by our individual charm. Our tyranny in India, our hypocrisy in Egypt, our perfidy in all foreign politics, caused her to grow extremely eloquent, and there was not a phase in our history for which I was not asked to blush. After thoroughly browbeating me she would tell me, in her charming way, that in spite of all our national iniquity there was no man in the world she would trust so readily as an English gentleman. I often wonder what she would say about the war ; but I shall never know, for she has passed into the mists of yesterday.

Another Frenchwoman asked me the other day if we were really taking the war seriously in England ! I asked her if she had seen our casualty lists ; she had not, but she had

heard from a friend in London that the gaieties of the season were going on as usual; and although we were drilling recruits and helping the Belgians, we did not sound satisfactory. 'Les Anglais sont tellement froids!' she added. 'It is difficult to know what they mean and what they feel.' Another woman—and she was one of the aristocrats of *le peuple*—told me, with a touch of defiance in her voice, that 'it appeared we were not pleased with the French.' Her source of information was an English hospital nurse; and I had much ado to make her understand that the information might not be infallible, any more than that which I had had myself from a journalist who told me with conviction that the French were tired of the English soldier. All these *potins* are as unimportant as the gossip which in times of peace hovers round the tea-tables of the suburbs; but from the point of view that little brooks make big rivers, they are worthy of our notice, and it seems to me that it is as necessary for women of no importance to avoid sowing discord in their small circles as it is for them to knit socks and cholera belts. It was a terrible

old French cynic who said, with all the tenderness peculiar to cynics, that 'tout savoir, c'était tout pardonner,' and it is only in trying to see each other's point of view that we shall ever arrive at an understanding, if English and French are to remain friends.

## POPULAR PROPHECIES

SINCE the war began France has rung with the voice of prophecy as well as that of patriotism, and all sorts of quaint and interesting legends have been revived. Most of them come indirectly from the church—sayings of monks and priests in far-away monasteries, back in the mists of time. But some date from quite recent years, and a few are of to-day. Mme. de Thèbes announced in her 'Almanac' of 1914 the beginning of great things for France. Victory, peace, love, and joy: 'France will come out of the struggle regenerate, young, and triumphant. Science will reach its maximum height and we have nothing to fear.' For Germany, the same prophetess had already drawn a very terrible picture. 'She will play her last cards in 1913. After that, great changes will take place in her Empire. War

will be fatal to her. She knows it, she fears it, and she would like to avoid it. But she has gone too far and too quickly. Her interior disturbances will force her hand, and she will enter into the fight she fears yet has prepared for so long . . . 'It is not,' she hints darkly, 'the Eagle of Victory that the Emperor carries on his shield.'

In 1913 Mme. Lenormand also predicted the present war: 'Very soon we shall have a European war declared by Germany, and that war will be Germany's end. She will never recover from it. We shall take back Alsace and Lorraine. William will see his star descend, and he will die miserable and lonely, deserted by all. He will be present at France's triumph. The war will be a short one.'

In 1906 a Mussulman prophesied the end of the power of the Hohenzollerns and this present war: 'In 1914 a great war will be declared in Europe, and the Emperor of Germany will be the one to declare it. Many Powers will take part in it. It will be the end of the German Empire. The Imperial dynasty will disappear. Two of the Emperor's

sons will die tragic deaths (notably the Crown Prince), and the third will die from illness. The Empress will go mad and be put into an asylum. Germany will be dismembered and a Republic will be proclaimed in Prussia.'

The Japanese prediction, which is said to have come from General Nogi, also promises the downfall of Germany. The great battle is likely to take place on the field of Waterloo and France is to be victorious by land, as England is to be triumphant by sea. A story is also told of a lady who met the present Emperor's grandfather at a ball, when he was Prince William of Prussia. She was asked to tell his fortune, and at first refused, but consented to do so if he would promise not to hold her responsible for what she said. The promise was given, and the Emperor learned his fate. He was to be crowned Emperor of Germany in 1871; and on learning this, he anxiously asked for more. Alas! After being made to do a complicated sum in arithmetic, he was told that in 1914 the German Empire would be dismembered and his successor would fall from his high position. Many of the various prophecies tell of the

fall of Germany, the reconstitution of Poland, and the recovery by France of Alsace and Lorraine ; but the most interesting of all the prophecies, and the one which is being most read and quoted, is that of Frère Johannes, a monk of the seventeenth century, whose story has been handed down from monk to monk until it fell into the hands of M. Peladin, and it is a M. Peladin *de nos jours* who has given it to the public to-day. On the boulevards it is being sold as the ‘Prophétie de l’Anti-Christ,’ and thousands of copies are bought every week. It is long and it is picturesque. If women worked in tapestry to-day it would be a subject fit for their needle. As it is, we are content to read it in print :

‘The true Anti-Christ will be a monarch and a son of Luther. He will call upon God and will count himself his messenger.

‘This lying prince will swear by the Bible : he will call himself an arm of the Most High, punishing on his way the evil nations.

‘He will have one arm only, but his armies will be numberless, and their device will be : “God With Us.”

‘ For a long time he will work by ruse and wickedness and his spies will overrun the earth. He will be master of secrets and powers.

‘ He will have scholars at his side who will prove his mission to be a heavenly one.

‘ A war will come which will cause him to lift his mask. It will not be the one which he will wage against a French monarch, but it will be easily recognised by the fact that in two weeks it will be universal.

‘ It will put all Christian people under arms, the Musulmans, and people even further away. Armies will come from the four corners of the world.

‘ For the angels will open the minds of men, and in the third week they will realise that this is the Anti-Christ and that they will become slaves unless they subdue him.

‘ The Anti-Christ will be recognised by many signs. He will make a point of causing priests, monks, women, children, and old men to be massacred. He will show no mercy. He will go on his way with a torch in his hand, like the savage, only he will do it in the name of God.

‘ His false words will be as those of the Christians, but his actions will be those of Nero and the Roman persecutors. He will show an eagle in his coat of arms, and there will be another in that of his acolyte, the other wicked monarch.

‘ But the latter is a Christian and he will die under the curse of Pope Benedict, who will be elected at the beginning of the reign of the Anti-Christ.

‘ Priests and monks will no longer be sent to confess and absolve the fighters; first, because for the first time in history, priests and monks will fight alongside other citizens and again, because Pope Benedict will have cursed the Anti-Christ and it will have been proclaimed that those who fight against him are in a state of grace and if they die will go direct to heaven like the martyrs.

‘ The Bull which proclaims this state of things will cause an immense sensation. It will strengthen the courage of many and it will kill the monarch who is the friend of the Anti-Christ.

‘ To conquer the Anti-Christ it will be necessary to kill more men than Rome has

ever held. Every country will be called upon to resist him, for the cock, the leopard, and the white eagle will not subdue the black eagle unless the prayers of all humanity are joined in their efforts.

‘Never will humanity have been in such a perilous position, because the triumph of the Anti-Christ would be that of the Devil, in whom he is incarnate.

‘Because it has been written that twenty centuries after the Word, the Beast shall be incarnate in his turn and shall menace the world with as much evil as the Divine Incarnation brought it of good.

‘About the year two thousand, the Anti-Christ shall be manifest. His army will outnumber anything that can be imagined. It will count among its men Christians, and among the defenders of the Lamb there will be Mahomedans and savages.

‘For the first time the Lamb will be red. There will not be a corner of the Christian world which will not be red, and red will be the sky, the earth, the waters, and even the air; for blood will flow from all four elements at one and the same time.

‘The black eagle will throw himself on the cock, who will lose many feathers, but who will fight heroically with his spurs. He would soon be vanquished without the help of the leopard and his teeth.

‘The black eagle will come from the country of Luther, he will surprise the cock from another frontier and will invade the land of the cocks unto the half of it.

‘The white eagle will come from the septentrion to surprise the black eagle and the other eagle, and he will invade the land of the black eagle from end to end.

‘The black eagle will be forced to leave the cock to fight the white eagle, and the cock will pursue the black eagle into the land of the Anti-Christ to help the white eagle.

‘The battles which will have taken place up to then will be nothing to those which will be fought in the country of Luther, for the seven angels will empty the vials of their wrath on the unholy ground (as pictured in the Apocalypse)—which is to say, that the Lamb will order the extermination of the race of the Anti-Christ.

‘When the Beast realises that it is beaten,

it will become furious and it will be necessary for the beak of the white eagle, the teeth of the leopard, and the spurs of the cock to fight it with all their might.

‘Men will cross the rivers by means of the dead bodies with which they are filled. Only men of high standing will be buried, the leaders of the armies and the princes, for the carnage caused by the war will be added to that caused by pestilence and famine.

‘The Anti-Christ will ask many times for peace, but the seven angels who march before the three animals who defend the Lamb have said that victory will not be given until the Anti-Christ shall be utterly destroyed.

‘As ministers of justice for the Lamb, the three animals cannot cease fighting as long as the Anti-Christ has soldiers.

‘The strength of the Lamb lies in the fact that the Anti-Christ has pretended to be a Christian and to act in His name, and unless he dies, the fruits of the Redemption would be lost and the gates of Hell would prevail against the Saviour.

‘It is clear to all, that it is no mere human combat which will take place where the

Anti-Christ forges his arms. The three animals which defend the Lamb will exterminate the last army of the Anti-Christ, but to do this it will be necessary to turn the battle-field into a slaughter-house as great as that of the greatest city, for the corpses will change the very form of the place, lying, as they will, in heaps.

‘The Anti-Christ will lose his crown and will die in solitude and madness. His empire will be divided into twenty-two states, but none of them will have either palace, army, or ships.

‘The white eagle, by the order of Michael, will drive the crescent from Europe, where only Christians will remain, and he will install himself in Constantinople.

‘After this an era of peace will begin and the whole world will experience prosperity. There will be no more war, each nation will govern itself according to its own heart and conception of justice.

‘There will be no more Lutherans or heretics. The Lamb will reign and the joys of humanity will begin.

‘Happy those who shall escape the perils

of those extraordinary days. They shall taste the fruit which will come with the reign of the Spirit and the sanctification of humanity, but which could not be realised until after the defeat of the Anti-Christ.'

Allowing for the authenticity of this curious document, it is easy to recognise the symbols it contains: France is the Cock, England is the Leopard, Russia is the White Eagle, Germany is the Black Eagle, and the 'Other Eagle' is Austria. Much that is prophesied in the first parts of the document has already come to pass. The war is world-wide, the surprise came from Belgium, not from the country of Luther, the country of the Cock has been invaded almost unto the half and but for the teeth of the Leopard he would certainly have lost more feathers than he has. The White Eagle has caused the Black Eagle to take troops away from Belgium to fight him in his own land and we may even say that the course of the rivers has been changed by the fallen, inasmuch as at Antwerp this happened. Pope Benedict was elected at the beginning of the war, and it remains

to be seen if he will issue his famous Bull. Priests and monks are fighting for the first time in history beside ordinary citizens, and among those who are fighting in the cause of the Allies are Mohammedans and soldiers from still further east. 'The Anti-Christ has but one arm, and his device was "God With Us."' It is certain that, for the majority of women, prayer is their solace and strength; and the prophecy says that 'the Cock, the Leopard, and the White Eagle will not vanquish the Black Eagle unless the prayers of all humanity are joined to their efforts.'

## A VISIT TO SENLIS AND MEAUX

To tell the beauty of the September morning as we drove from Chantilly to Senlis would be as great an achievement as to capture and keep a ray of sunlight. It seemed as if Nature were bent upon singing a song of praise that the countryside had been delivered from the invading forces; and if, in the melody of the shimmering poplars, a note of melancholy were discernible, it only made the harmonies more fitting; for every inch of the road we covered had been ridden over by German cavalry. We thought we could distinguish the marks of the German horses' hoofs on the roadside; we imagined the terror of any inhabitants who might have remained in the smiling village of Saint Firmin as they watched, from their hiding-places, the enemy's troops ride past; and the sight of an old woman in a blue handkerchief-cap, who sat

peacefully shredding beans at her cottage door, made us wonder if the whole story of the war were not a nightmare from which we should awake very soon.

There were no signs of wanton destruction or pillage on the way to Senlis, and the distant spires of the cathedral against the blue sky assured us that, even though maimed, it still stood, a fair symbol of a great religion. Neither was the entrance to the town depressing, although to the right, in the distance, we saw the hillside from which the German guns bombarded the town; and in the garden of an old house, gay with autumn flowers, golden pears, and rosy-cheeked apples, a small dark-eyed boy showed us an unexploded German shell deeply embedded in the trunk of an acacia tree. The small boy's rôle of showman will prove a lucrative business as time goes on and the curious sightseer begins to invade the sleepy little town once more; so for him, at least, war has brought unexpected fortune.

Another sign that the enemy had passed this way is still visible in the chalk marks on the house doors. 'Gute Leute' has been

scrawled on several of them, and I am told that it signifies the inhabitants as being good folk, who may be left unmolested. Lower down the town the temper of the invader changed completely, and became arrogant and revengeful. Three of the narrow winding streets have been quite destroyed by fire, not shell fire, but wilful incendiarism, and one-half of the station is in ruins. Most of the houses were the homes of poor people; and to see them lying there nothing but heaps of stones, iron, and charred wood, is a dismal sight. All the common household gods are burnt to cinders, the iron bedsteads are twisted and tortured out of all shape. The whereabouts of the kitchens are to be traced by the stoves, which still stand upright among the heaps of bricks and mortar, and a coffee-pot, or a saucepan, holds its place on crumbling shelf or wall, with a tenacity that is almost human. In one house a bit of gay-striped awning still blows with bright defiance, quite unscorched by German fire; and an arm's length away from the worst of the burning, stand houses on which the paint is not so much as blistered.



SENLIS AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT



CONSTRUCTING A BRIDGE OF BARGES ON THE MARNE



Sadder still, from the æsthetic point of view, is it to see the ruins of beautiful old houses staring mournfully at their own gardens, in which the flowers still bloom and thrust forth new blossoms under the kindly autumn sun. Nothing now remains of these gentle dwellings but a few blackened walls, to which the ivy, scorched and browned, still clings persistently. Grim proofs of the trials through which the quiet cathedral town has just passed.

But grim as are these stories in stone, they are nothing to the grimness of the human stories which were told us in the town. Thirty peaceful citizens were sacrificed to German military arrogance—seven were taken as hostages and shot outside the town, the rest were burned or buried under the ruins of their own homes. We heard the story from the curé as we stood in the dim light of his cool, flagged hall, looking out on his garden, with its Michaelmas daisies, its salvias, and its gorgeous dahlias. The cathedral clock struck the half-hour, and from the sunlit Place came the murmur of children's voices as they played; otherwise,

there was no sound but the voice of M. le Curé as he told the story of what had happened during the brief occupation of the town by the enemy. He made no attempt at rhetoric; but as he stood in his black soutane, with one hand resting on the balustrade of an old oak staircase, and his fine old face grave with the memory of all he had seen, he made an impressive picture. Curiously enough, he strongly resembles Holbein's portrait of Archbishop Wareham, which hangs in the Louvre. Both faces show the same long top lip, the same steady eyes and heavy features. But particularly did one feel the likeness in the expression of stern kindness which is written in every line of both faces.

When the Germans came to Senlis there were French troops in the town, and the mayor could not, in consequence, go out to meet the enemy with his scarf of office and the white flag. Later, the troops were withdrawn; but a Senegalese is said to have fired on some German cavalry in the immediate neighbourhood, and this was used as a pretext for the bombardment of the town. Shells fell in all directions and with extreme rapidity.

Threats were made to burn the entire town, and special aim was made against the cathedral which received seventy-five shells, and yet is scarcely damaged at all. The curé was in the church during the whole of the bombardment, and after the dropping of each shell went out to examine the injured spot. It is a curious point, and M. le Curé indicated it to a younger colleague who was listening to the story with us, that not only was his cathedral practically unharmed in spite of the violent attack that had been made on it, but on that very day the tide of the war began to turn in favour of France: 'And you will remember that it was the birthday of the *Sainte Vierge*.'

When the bombardment had ceased and the Germans were in the town, M. le Curé visited the officer in command and begged that the citizens might be left unmolested, and his cathedral untouched. Fortunately he found a man who had some sense of civil justice, but before gaining his point he was put to much humiliation. He was accused of allowing mitrailleuses to be placed in the cathedral tower for the purpose of being turned

on German troops, and his answer was to invite the officer to 'come and see for himself.' 'No one has a key of the tower but myself; therefore no one can go in without my knowledge. No one has been in but myself, and you cannot think that I would carry mitrailleuses on my back, I suppose!' Satisfied, in spite of themselves, that the curé was not deceiving them, the officers were not yet ready to be humanely inclined; so they threatened to take the priest as a hostage with the mayor and other citizens, hoping thereby to terrify him. But M. le Curé is not a man to be terrified at the thought of death, and all he did was to accept their threats with calmness. 'This morning,' he said, with a bend of the head, 'I offered my life to God at mass, so I am quite ready.' Before such dignified simplicity, military arrogance melted, and through sheer moral superiority M. le Curé saved his cathedral, and his own life was accorded to him.

With the exception of the shot from the Senegalese, there was only one provocative act in the town, and that came from a *marchand de tabac*, who stood in front of his

shop door and refused point-blank to serve a German. He was shot as he stood, and by order of the German officers his body was left where it fell until they went out of the town. In spite of practically no opposition to their entry, however, a great deal of ill-feeling was shown, and after they had drunk heavily, as is their manner, much misplaced revelry was given rein, and while Senlis burned, Germany fiddled—not figuratively, but literally; for they sacked the house of a professor of music, and with his musical instruments they sang and danced before his windows.

The mayor was less successful in his mission than the curé, although no one can say he failed in doing his duty. His efforts to save the town were bravely carried through, and he paid for them with his own life. Everything was against him—the town was not an open one; he had no great prize of money with which to tempt the invader; moreover, it was undeniable that a shot had been fired. So he, with six of his fellow-citizens, was led to the outskirts of the town, and there they were shot.

It is difficult to believe, as one stands in the cobble-stoned square behind the cathedral, with its quaint old houses and its splendid old trees, that war has passed and left such terrible traces ; for there no sign of the enemy is to be found, except in the injured turret of the church, round which the jackdaws keep up an eternal protestation ; obviously, it was one of their favourite building corners. Surely the whole story must be imagination ! But again reality is forced upon us by the figure of a small boy in baggy knickers and a little blue apron, who strutted about singing at the top of his voice, ‘Morceaux d’obus, un sou ! Morceaux d’obus, un sou !’ And we knew, indubitably, that war had passed this way. So did the small boy, for in a very short time he had exchanged his German metal for good French copper, and he felt himself a proud and happy member of his family in consequence.

In the cathedral, we found a little group of kneeling men and women. The scent of autumn flowers—asters, Michaelmas daisies, and dahlias—filled the aisles and gave to the Lady Chapel an added touch of homeliness,

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so that every prayer sent up to the Blessed Virgin from that quiet church was perfumed with the scent of cottage-garden blossoms rather than with the exotic odour of incense.

*[By kind permission of the Proprietor  
of "The Queen."*

## MEAUX

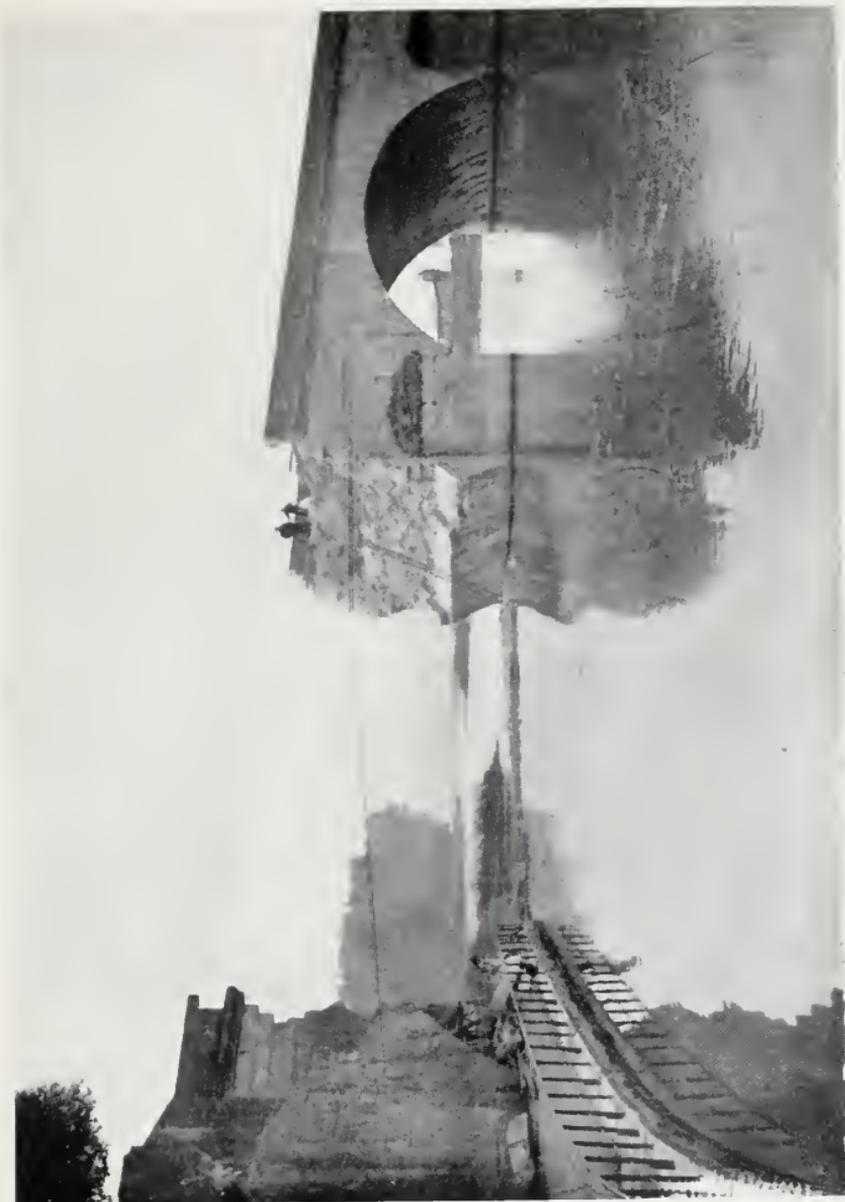
THE train crawled out of Paris through peaceful suburbs and alongside the quiet waters of the Marne. From the windows of the villas, bedding was hung to air; and in the gardens, women were busy gathering vegetables and preparing the ground for the winter. Nothing could have looked more peaceful, more suggestive of French middle-class prosperity. Even the sentries at the bridges failed to give a martial air to the scene; for there is something essentially domestic in the silhouette of the good territorial, who, in homely blouse or comfortable overcoat, grasps the deadly rifle with its bayonet point and wears the military kepi with distinction. It needed the troop trains on the sidings, and the trucks of wounded passing slowly by, to bring home to us the real situation. From the sidings came a

storm of gay voices and a clamour for the daily papers. The morning toilette (and that of the French soldier on duty is not elaborate) was going on in all its stages, and the men looked well and happy. But from the trains of wounded there was no sound of life, only here and there a glimpse of a bandaged head or a recumbent figure.

Before reaching Esbly we crossed one of the bridges over the river which had been blown up to prevent the march of the enemy. In a week, the engineers had reared up an iron skeleton, and it was across that we passed. As we were on the steps of the train (one of those which has roof carriages) we could look sheer down into the water as we made our very slow way over, and the effect was both wonderful and dizzy. Later on, we crossed another hastily erected structure of the same kind, and we were told that it was there that the train of wounded had fallen into the river one dark, wet night during the battle of the Marne. One could see the scene in imagination, and the beautiful countryside as we saw it then looked soberly magnificent, as if in memory of those sixty

stretchers, each with its human burden, which were drowned in the deepest part of the river. All night long men were working to save others, standing for hours in water up to their waists, and, in the darkness, trying to find ambulances to relieve them of their loads. It was only a week or two ago, but time has already wiped out those marks by making others; and now, where men were working to save their fellow-men from drowning, there is a colony of engineers working night and day to build up the bridge and restore communications on the line to their normal conditions.

At Meaux, we found that the bridge by the picturesque old mill had been blown up, and the river below it blocked with overturned washing and bathing houses. A little further down, at Trilport, is another broken bridge, which was the scene of a German tragedy. Three officers in a motor-car drove straight into the river, not knowing that the bridge had been destroyed. They were all drowned, and a friend of ours was the owner, for a short time, of a postcard written by one of the officers to his wife in Germany,



BRIDGE AT TRILPORT BLOWN UP BY THE ALLIES



with tender messages to his children. The wife should now be in possession of the card, and perhaps she knows of the death of her husband.

As we mounted the steep streets of Meaux and came in view of the cathedral, we saw a little group of people surrounding a splendid figure in brilliant magenta robes and purple biretta. It was the celebrated Bishop of Meaux, whose name is blessed and beloved by every poor man and woman in the town. When the civil officials fled, the bishop stayed, and not only did he stay, but he fed his people and tended the sick and wounded who were brought into the city from all sides. His clear, ringing voice and mobile face were pleasant sounds and sights; and the little metal *breloque* that he gave us will be always counted among our most precious possessions, even as his gay smile will be among our few pleasant memories of the war.

The town of Meaux has not suffered at German hands, for it was never bombarded. A few miserable shells, as a good territorial told us, fell in the town, but the damage they

did was not serious. It is all around Meaux that the work was done, and as we drove from one village to another, passing along the interminable poplar-lined roads, there was not a mile of the way but held traces of the dreadful struggle that had been carried on there but a week or two before. Where the armies had camped, unmistakable signs were visible; empty tins, bits of clothing, black spots where Tommy's kettle had been boiled, places where Tommy had done 'a bit of washing,' and wherever the Germans had been there were multitudes of empty bottles. The trees were lying on the roadsides cut clean off by shells; trunks were splintered, and branches were burnt. Great holes all over the fields showed where shells had pierced the ground, and everywhere there were empty shells, and sometimes full ones.

Saddest of all the many sad sights round Meaux are the hundreds of little brown mounds marked by rough wooden crosses, a bunch of flowers, and sometimes a kepi. They lie beside the road, and they are scattered all over the wide, fair plateau. English, French, and German are buried there, but the

German graves have no cross and no bunch of flowers; for the peasants who have been called upon to bury the dead have suffered too much from German arrogance to allow of them offering immediate signs of forgiveness. It is painful to think that all these graves are nameless; but it comforts not a few to think of brave men lying under so wide an expanse of sky, surrounded by such a beautiful land, with the winds to moan their requiem and the birds, when the spring shall come again, to sing of their resurrection.

Whatever village we passed through we saw evidence of German destruction and heard stories of German cruelty. At Barcy the scene was lamentable. The village church is a complete wreck, and the houses all round are in ruins. A German officer set fire to the church with his own hands, after pouring petroleum on the more inflammable parts. Every window was smashed, the beams of the belfry were burnt, and the roof was utterly shattered by shells. The schoolhouse is in ruins, and among them a child's straw hat hangs untouched on its peg. Common ornaments and bottles stand on shelves unhurt,

and every sign of recent human habitation among such terrible desolation emphasises the sadness of the scene. When the Germans passed through Barcy there were only six people left in it, and these they terrified in their usual way. They ransacked the cellars, and when unable to drink or carry away all the wine that was there they emptied it on the ground in preference to leaving it for those to whom it belonged. They drove the frightened inhabitants before the guns; they terrified, if they did not actually torture, the women; and much as one would like to believe that the tales one hears about their cruelty are exaggerated, it is difficult to think that they are after visiting the villages round Meaux. The only possible construction to put upon many of their actions is that the men who committed them must have been drunk. Many of the things we heard are too terrible to put in writing, but the memory of them will remain with us for a long time.

After leaving Barcy we dropped down a steep hill into a picturesque little village of grey houses occupied by French troops; but there we were stopped by sentries and



BARCY VILLAGE AFTER BOMBARDMENT



turned back. Before leaving the village we gave cigarettes and matches to the men, and were rewarded by sincerely grateful smiles and words; for it seems that tobacco is no longer obtainable in the Meaux district, as some rich man in the town bought up many hundred francs' worth to give to the English troops when they were doing such good work in the neighbourhood. As we climbed up to the plateau again the horses pricked their ears and our driver listened attentively. 'There are the guns!' he said. 'They are the other side of Soissons.' We listened for a moment, and, sure enough, the boom we all know now came across the country, muffled by the distance, but not to be mistaken for a moment. We heard later, from a man who had come from Soissons, that they were the heavy guns of the Allies turned on the enemy's trenches.

When we reached the last grey village, before turning back again into the road for Meaux, the night was beginning to fall. The first star was shining in the sky, and the peasants were filing back to the village from the fields. Most of them were women in

blue handkerchief-caps and shapeless bodices. They were wheeling barrow-loads of beetroot, or they were carrying on their backs loads of green fodder for their cows. They all looked sad, and as we passed they did not make the usual sign of greeting. It is not to be wondered at—their homes, in many cases, are in ruins, all round them the battle raged for days and days, and now they live among the ruins and the graves. Every morning they get up to the contemplation of trenches from which the soldiers have fired, and in which they have fallen; their corn and beetroot have been used as cover, and have been trampled under-foot by men and horses. They are continually reminded of those who have fallen, and when darkness comes they retire to rest haunted by the horrors of it all and the mournfulness of their own future. We shivered as we passed the sign-post riddled by shells, and we were glad to drop down the hill into Meaux, leaving behind us a page of history in which the gallant little English Army played a brave and important part.

*[By kind permission of the Proprietor  
of "The Queen."]*

## SIDELIGHTS OF THE WAR

QUITE apart from all the actual effects of the war, life in Paris, since the mobilisation, has been interesting, and at times amusing. The wheels of everyday existence were so ruthlessly shaken out of their usual lines that everybody did something unexpected, either because they had to or because they wanted to. One of my friends found herself cheerfully trundling her own trunks down the boulevards on a handcart, or a 'push-cart,' as she called it, because she could not get a cab of any kind to do it for her. Her servant marched beside her carrying the mascot of the family, a black cat, named Moretta. They were coming in from the outskirts of the town for convenience, and their temporary lodging has now taken on the comforts of a permanency.

Shyness and social distinctions melted

rapidly in the furnace of war, and when the painful happenings of August were made known to us in Paris we all fraternised and forgot past differences. The antagonisms of years died sudden, painless deaths before the advance of the Germans; and if it had not been so grave, the moment would have been intensely humorous. Lovers of solitude became suddenly gregarious and sought the companionship they had hitherto despised. The most 'superior' people forgot their superiority in a human desire for sympathy, and even the power of money seemed for the moment to be in abeyance. Comfort came to all, even to the most logical, from the strangest sources. One's cook heard that a *monsieur très haut placé* had told his mother that she would be safer in Paris than anywhere, and we all felt relieved. A soldier from the front assured us that it was 'all right,' and our fears were calmed, although he was but a simple soldier and as ignorant as ourselves about the way things were going. Even the baby trenches round the city gates and the strewing of branches on the roads made us feel that we were not

utterly without defence should the enemy invade the city. But nothing soothed us so much as the rumour that the Russians—the Cossacks moreover—were coming from Archangel; and although the mystery of that rumour is still unexplained, it served a good purpose, for it kept up the hearts of thousands when all other rumours tended to discouragement.

It is only on looking back that we realise what an extremely primitive collection of human beings we were when the enemy was advancing; and Rumour had 'tired her head and painted her face' so violently that she literally scared half Paris. We all faced, in imagination, the horrors of murder and sudden death; and the prospect failed to charm. We found out that we did not really want to die, even though we had raved against life and its miseries for years. So some of us went and some of us stayed; and all of us hoped for the best, even when we feared the worst. As things turned out, those who stayed had the better time. The weather was golden, Paris was more enchanting than I have ever known it; and I have a

fancy to which I cling, that the Spirit of the city came forth in all her beauty during those anxious days, and disclosed, to those who remained, qualities which, to others, will never be revealed. All day the sunlight played about the empty spaces, and all night the moon shone softly down on towers and spires and gently flowing waters. Even now, when Paris is comparatively full of busy, talkative, money-making people, the spirit of those days comes back to me at intervals and reconciles me to many things. Along the *quais* in the morning, the golden poplars fling a shower of leaves at my feet as I pass, and the river smiles up at me with intimate fondness. We have been through hard times together, and there is nothing so binding. In the evening again, along the same *quais*, the trees are dim and mysterious; so is the river, with its motionless barges and rare lights, red, green, and golden. On the opposite bank, the irregular line of dwelling-houses shows a ragged fringe of brilliant lights which here and there get into a dazzling tangle. It is at such moments that one reaps the compensation for having

stayed with Paris when her very existence was in danger.

At a café on the boulevards 'où l'on cause encore,' during the most anxious days journalists and seekers after the latest news used to congregate in the late afternoon and there proceed to air their opinions, optimistic, pessimistic, and merely non-committal. The tables were not crowded, the atmosphere was not heavy with smoke, and even men with a reputation for the most incurable persiflage could not disguise the mental strain which they were undergoing. The owner of Moretta used to come and cheer everyone by her persistent attitude of cheerful readiness to accept whatever came along. A French lover of Dickens showed a constant optimism which was very contagious. A silent Englishman had a way of discounting all pessimistic rumours by going on with what he had to do in a perfectly unmoved fashion; and every one, in his or her own way, clung steadily to the belief that, in spite of ministerial scares and diplomatic warnings, the military authorities knew what they were about, and the chances were good that they would be able

to turn the enemy before it got to Paris. We had very little ground to go on, for we knew practically nothing ; but, as M. de Mun said, there was always instinct to fall back on, and instinct had several times been proved more far-seeing than reason.

Stray soldiers—English, French and Belgian—used to come in with news from the front, and in the face of flagrantly bad *communiqués* they persisted in saying that things were going well. They agreed that Paris was enough to depress anyone, and they assured us that ‘out there’ life was much brighter. In the meantime, we had to make the best of our position, which materially was quite comfortable, but morally was most painful. Apart from the women of the people, who were always busy and steady, Paris showed some strange feminine types in those days. They must have crept out of niches in which they had been ensconced for years. Very old women, dressed in rusty black garments, would trail past one in the streets like sombre ghosts—slender figures of younger women who might have stepped out of a number of *The Quiver* in 1886, with their pinched

waists, wide shoulders, and flounced skirts. Haggard women of all ages hung about the cafés looking hungry. Strange men in weird clothes, with beards suggestive of the patriarchs, and hoarse croaking voices—drug-takers, roof-dwellers from Montmartre—they all drifted to the boulevards in those days, to see what there was to be seen, and to hear what there was to be heard. They all longed to be in touch with something strong, something that would give them courage, and their lonely rooms repelled them.

At the American Embassy, Mr. Herrick, the acting ambassador, was supported unofficially by Mr. Sharpe, who was to succeed him, and by Mr. Robert Bacon who had preceded him. Both the embassy and the consulate staffs were very busy; for besides looking after their own people they had been called upon to do the work of many embassies, including our own, and also that of our consulate. They were responsible, also, for the welfare of Germans and Austrians, and had charge of the concentration camps, where many thousands were interned. For long weeks the embassy and the consulate staffs

had been working to get Americans away from Paris, and that alone was a stupendous task. Moreover, the American Ambassador was called upon to play a very important rôle should the Germans get into the city. He was first of all to ensure the safety of Americans in the city, both their persons and their property. All American residents had registered themselves and their houses. Plaques were ready to be put on their houses, and orders were given that no American flag was to be flown until German permission had been obtained, should Paris be invested. The French Government counted greatly on American intervention in this case, and the presence of the three Ambassadors in Paris at that moment was probably one of those prearranged coincidences upon which diplomacy prides itself. As things happened, the good offices of America were not needed in this case; but the firm attitude of the embassy and consulate staff, their ready courtesy to the meanest of those under their official care, are things we should remember as we remember and appreciate American

energy and generosity in helping to care for the sick and wounded soldiers.

A curious spy story came to us the other day which signifies yet once more how keen the *chasse aux espions* has become. An English lady bought and equipped a motor ambulance for fetching wounded from the front. She herself went with the car, accompanied by a chauffeur and a stretcher-bearer. Coming one night from Braisne, where the wounded were being brought in by hundreds from continuous fighting on the other side of the Aisne, she was arrested by two English officers. 'But I am English!' 'Nonsense, why you do not even speak English.' They were alluding to her slightly foreign accent, not her grammar, due to the fact that she has lived in France for a good many years and has chiefly moved in French circles. She protested, showed her papers, offered to produce more proofs in Paris, but all to no good. She was fair and she must be foreign, or she would not have that accent. So she was led away between two soldiers; and her wounded, with their

attendants and the car, were guarded by others. On her way she met the chauffeur of a Frenchman whose family she knew well; so she called him to her side at once to ask if his master were with him. 'Oui, Mademoiselle, il déjeune en ce moment.' 'Tant mieux!' said the prisoner, 'Ask him to come here at once and tell him I am arrested as a spy.' Quicker than the wind 'Monsieur' arrived, and there followed volumes of explanations. She was vouched for over and over again. Her name, her family history, her friends in numbers, were all cited in her favour; but the English officers were hard to convince. Nothing would persuade them that she was English. If she were not German, then she must be Russian. Anyway, she answered absolutely to the description of the woman they had been warned to look out for. Eventually, however, she was delivered from their clutches, unwillingly they let her go, and to this day, I hear, they cling to their suspicions on account of that hint of an accent in her speech.

Another story direct from the war was of a French soldier, a simple *piou-piou* who,

in times of peace, is a promising young barrister in Paris. During some weeks he had led the life of the fighting soldier under its roughest conditions. He had scarcely had the time to eat and sleep, and none at all to shave and wash. The world of civilisation seemed far from him, and the subtleties of law were to him as though they had never been. To his utter confusion, during a lull in the operations, he was called upon to defend a man in his own regiment who was to be tried by court martial for mutiny. For a time, the task seemed to him quite impossible. Every legal argument, every plausible phrase he had ever known, had slipped away from him, and he stood tongue-tied and impotent. But when he was just on the point of despair, he remembered the man he was asked to defend, and a great desire to be the means of getting him acquitted stung his mind to action and gave eloquence to his tongue. He pleaded his case so well that the man was acquitted, and he himself was complimented by his colonel.

I was asked this week to visit a lieutenant of the Royal Irish Rifles who was lying

wounded in a Paris hospital. I remembered him as a boy at home and I went with some foreboding as I had heard that he had been badly hit in the face, and I should have to report truly to his mother. The hospital he had been taken to was run entirely by English-women—women surgeons, women physicians, women nurses—only men patients. It was an immense relief to hear on inquiry that he was up and out of danger; and it was a still greater relief to find that, beyond a scar, he would not be much the worse for his wound. There were two other officers in the room where he was sitting, and I stopped and talked with them for an hour. They were most delightful companions and none of them wore the ‘anguished’ expression which is supposed to mark the man who has been through the recent battles. They all agreed that the war was a very bad business and not one of them wanted to go back to the Aisne. ‘It’s an awful mess there,’ said one of them, a big man with his head in bandages and a red blanket wrapped round his legs to supplement an inadequate dressing-gown. ‘You see, we are practically fighting

on the same ground all the time, and the Germans won't bury their dead and they won't let us do it for them.' Another man, with the cheerful, limpid, well-groomed expression some fair Englishmen seem to have, had been hit by a bullet which had gone right through his chest and had not touched his lungs. He, too, said he was prepared to see it through, but should certainly not be sorry when it was over. 'It's not war, it's slaughter.' The man I had gone to see was the youngest of the three and he had been in France since the beginning of the war. He had fought at Mons, at Le Cateau, and marched 125 miles in four days, during two of which they had not had anything to eat. 'We were all gibbering by the end of the second day, and we used to see things that were not there. We often ducked our heads to avoid railway bridges that did not exist, and I was always smelling food that never came. After that, however, it was better. The people used to throw food at us as we passed, and we never quite starved again.' I asked them if the dreadful stories of German atrocities were true, and

they all said they were ; but with no intent to prejudice me against the enemy, for they all agreed that the German soldiers were brave and wonderfully disciplined. They gave the blame of the pillaging and murder to the officers, and put much of their worst work down to drink. The man who had been hit by a bullet in his chest, told me that he had been taken prisoner by the Germans on one occasion. 'They were really very considerate, for they took me out of our own line of fire and put me in the charge of two men with fixed bayonets so that I could watch the show in safety. Every time our men rolled one of theirs over, I wanted to applaud ; but I didn't, as you may imagine, and as the fire got hotter and hotter I wondered what was going to happen. Finally, our fellows got the better of them and they just scuttled and forgot all about me, which was lucky for me.'

The Royal Irish Rifles suffered badly on the Marne. They were in the thick of the fighting, and the lieutenant in hospital, who was the last officer to cross the bridge at Meaux before it was blown up, was also the

only officer of his battalion at the end of the Marne battle who went home to tell the tale.

This morning I had a letter from a French friend who is nursing with the *Croix Rouge* at a little seaside place in Brittany. I saw her before she left Paris and she brought home to me very acutely how the women in France are suffering, and how bravely. Her only son, a boy of twenty-three, who has just finished his military service, was already in the fighting line. She knew he was in the north but she did not know where, and she had had no news from him for three weeks. As we were talking, her husband came in to ask her to decide whether she would accept to go with their ambulance to Chalons. 'Must I decide now?' 'You must, I am afraid; the ambulance goes to-morrow, and if you will not go, some one else must be asked to take your place.' We both knew why she could not answer, and neither of us could say a word. Suddenly, as if the words were wrung from her, she turned to me and said in a voice I shall never forget, for it held the pain, the eternal pain, of motherhood

in it: 'C'est que J— est dans le nord!' Her husband turned away his head and God only knows how *his* heart was wrung. But she went to Chalons, only to be ordered to evacuate it on the following day, and the Germans occupied it two days later. For many painful days they were journeying back to Paris, and finally they were ordered to Brittany. Their son has been fighting all the time, and has risen from corporal to lieutenant; but the mother's fears have not lessened with his promotion. And she is but one of the thousands of mothers, of all nationalities, who are bearing the same burden.

Yet another story has come to us in these days which brings the war and all its horrors even more painfully and realistically home to us. A workgirl in whom we were interested, and who has been stranded in Paris since the beginning of the war with no work and no money and no natural protector of any kind, has at last heard news of her family in Lille. Her brother-in-law, who is employed on the Northern Railway, came into Paris this week and told her that since the war

began he has completely lost sight of his wife, her sister, his children, and a second sister-in-law, who is looking after a poor little 'over-the-hatch' baby. 'They have all disappeared. I can get no news of them anywhere. I have tried every way I can think of, but all to no good. As to our home! It no longer exists. All that part of Lille is burned to the ground. The Germans were mad because they expected to find a lot of valuable machinery there, but it had already been taken away; so they burned and pillaged everywhere. Worse still, they have violated the women and girls, and then killed them with horrible brutality.' The man was dull and heavy with misery. So many of them are. And there is nothing to be said to comfort them.

## A VISIT TO ORLEANS

October 11.—It is always more or less of an adventure to go by train in these days, even though one's destination be only the *banlieue* of Paris, and it is as well to be provided with a superfluity of identity papers rather than too few. A friend of mine experienced the difficulty of proving himself to be himself only last week, when he went out to Meaux and on to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre with his bicycle. In Paris, the *commissaire* of his quarter assured him that all his papers were in order to meet the two days' needs. At Meaux, the military authorities were of the same mind and were even impressed favourably by the fact that he was in possession of a blank 'safe conduct.' At La Ferté, however, he aroused suspicion, because he was tall and grey-headed and the authorities had been warned against such a one. Everybody is liable to arrest in these



A RUINED CHÂTEAU AT LA FERTÉ-SOUS-JOUARRE



days, even Frenchmen, for we all have spies on the brain and it is not to be wondered at. My friend had bought a ticket for Epernay and was on the point of registering his bicycle to the same place when a gendarme requested him to show his papers. Quite happily he produced his budget, but the gendarme looked serious: 'This won't do at all. There is something wrong. How did you get so far with so few papers? You must come with me.' And he was led off to the *mairie*, where a council of several heavy-featured officials sat in judgment over him for hours, until at last he dropped off to sleep before their eyes and they were forced to let him go to bed in charge of the gendarme, who slept on the mat of his door. The next morning he was brought back to the *mairie* and all the questioning began again, with the result, that not being able to unravel the mystery themselves they decided to send him in charge to Meaux and let higher authorities deal with him. It took the whole day to carry through these formalities and the only enlivening incidents were lunch, the taking of one or two photographs of his jailors, and a lengthy argument with the

railway officials as to whether he should be allowed to have his fare to Epernay returned, and if he should be made to pay for his enforced return to Meaux. I am glad to say they returned him his ticket money, as to add robbery to arrest would indeed have been unkind! At Meaux, where they arrived late in the afternoon, a 'comic opera' French major, an 'Adelphi' English sub-lieutenant, and a *procureur* with a sense of humour, sat in further judgment on his case. The weak point, on his side, was the blank 'safe conduct,' the very thing which had been in his favour the day before. They turned it over a thousand times, as if it might disclose its own guiltiness. They questioned and cross-questioned the unfortunate prisoner, who, by this time, was extremely tired of the whole business. They inquired into the minutest details of his life, and finally one man rose into Olympian wrath because he acknowledged to not knowing the Christian name of the *commissaire* of his quarter in Paris with whom he claimed to be on good terms. At this, the *procureur* with a sense of humour protested: '*Voyons, voyons, mon ami*, that might quite easily be

the case, for I can claim to knowing my *commissaire* well also, but I do not know his Christian name either.' Eventually, after each man, including the sub-lieutenant, had administered a moral lecture to the defaulter, he was let off because there was really no case against him, and for five hours he wandered the moonlit streets of Meaux waiting for the station doors to open for passengers wishing to go to Paris by the last train. Every house-door was closed, and only from behind closed shutters did rays of light filter dimly. It was cold and he was hungry, as well as tired and bored beyond description. There is no glory in being arrested as a spy and there is much inconvenience; therefore we decided to arm ourselves with every identification paper we could gather together when we went to Orleans—birth and marriage certificates, passports, *permis de séjour*, identity cards, and any amount of letters from 'persons of irreproachable distinction.' The result was we were never asked to show so much as an envelope, but the inner satisfaction that we could do so if necessary was comforting.

We shall always remember our visit to

Orleans during the war as a pleasant incident in a painful time. The journey there was long; for the train went so slowly that it might have been led by a territorial on a leading-string. We stopped everywhere and anywhere, just as the engine-driver felt inclined, apparently, and at roadside stations we hung out of the carriages and made friends with the villagers and dogs who had collected to see us pass. Arrangements for the reception of wounded were made on most stations, and the Tricolour waved at all points. As we waited in one station, a woman in Red Cross uniform, attended by a soldier, collected money for the wounded, in a German cap. There is something very unpleasant about those German military caps. They seem to have taken on the disagreeable personality of the average German. They are aggressive in form and colour and they suggest brutality. I would rather have been asked to put my dole into a French kepi or a khaki service-cap.

Our fellow-travellers talked all the way about the war. One, a middle-aged woman from the Pyrenees, with definite ideas and primitive emotions, related in vivid language

a perfect budget of political and military scandals. A little golden-haired lady listened with wide-open ears and eyes; and an old Norman chuckled gleefully when the narrative grew particularly coloured and rampant. She painted, in futurist fashion, did that warm-hearted lady; and if she set the sound-waves moving in the right directions, the ears of a great many Parisian personalities must have tingled under the sting of her tongue. On the other hand, she grew very gentle when she spoke of the soldiers, whom she spent most of her time nursing, and her admiration for our men was unbounded. 'They are so handsome, so gay, so strong and so brave; and *mon Dieu*, how clean they are!' In fact, the Tommies had completely vanquished her and when we passed the Army Service men in camp she nearly fell out of the window waving her handkerchief at them.

At Les Aubraies we had our first sight of the Indian troops. The brown faces under khaki turbans, the slim lithe figures and the touch of mystery which always hangs about Eastern races, made a curious note among the bustle of the French junction. They were

stared at a good deal, but not rudely. At Orleans, almost directly we set foot in the town, we saw a mule-cart in charge of four natives, jingling gently through the streets, and from that moment we looked upon Orleans as a junction for the East. It was strange to see how calmly those dignified Sikhs went about their shopping without knowing any language but their own, which no one else could speak, and with Indian money. With gentle, patient dignity they waited while the shopkeepers decided whether they could take the rupee and, if they did, what they should pay for it. They made no attempt to explain themselves, or their way of doing things, or their money. They just stood there pointing out what they wanted to buy and how much of it ; and then they handed the money to pay for it, *tant pis* for the shopkeeper if he did not know what to do with it ! Only one bank in the town would change Indian money and the native never bothered to go there unless it happened to be on his way.

Apart from its peculiar interest to us as a centre for our troops, Orleans won us by a charm of its own. Many people think it



A MULE-CART IN THE STREETS OF ORLEANS



dull and not at all picturesque, but it struck us as gentle and rather subtly beautiful. It is rather like a woman who is never called pretty, but who, to those who know her, is beautiful. The streets are clean, the buildings dignified, and a few of them are architecturally and historically very interesting. The people are polite and the broad, shallow Loire which flows at the foot of the hill is the home of many beautiful lights and shadows reflected from the changing sky overhead. Mud banks, green islands, shallow blue pools, and swift currents make the Loire a changing and fascinating river; and if, in certain places, it suggests drains, well, one tries to forget one's nose by using one's eyes more industriously.

Historically, it is dominated by Joan of Arc. Sometimes she is depicted as a warlike maid, more often she is shown to us as a saint. Her image and superscription are over all things, and it is the history of her life and work for France which makes the interest of Orleans. Yet Orleans has a distinct personality of its own and it was in that we found its charm. In times of peace we could imagine it a complete picture of provincial

life, quiet—dull if you will—but very dignified in the manner of bygone centuries—those of a French Jane Austen. Its shops suggest a passing from father to son, its walled-in gardens show trees and bushes that have bloomed and blossomed in orderly perfection for ages, and nowhere is there any touch of sordid poverty, even in the meanest streets. There are also cellars of rare wines, I am told, and they are untouched by German raiders this time. In 1870 the tale was different; for the town was held by the Germans for several months, and there are marks and monuments of their passage in and around the city.

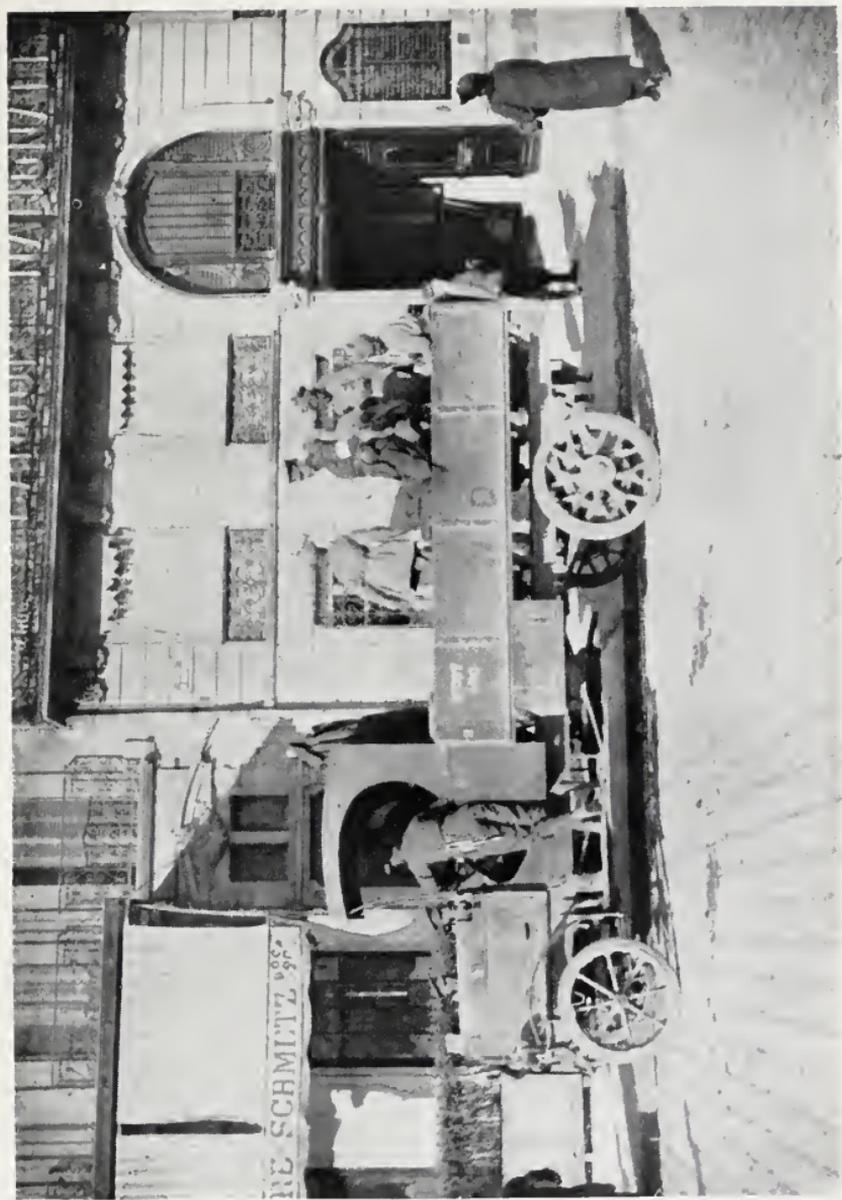
Five hundred years ago we, the English, invaded Orleans. It seems strange to think so when one sees our soldiers and the native troops camping in the neighbourhood as friends and allies of France. More especially does it seem strange when one listens to the Orleans women talking about the English soldier whom they love; for here, as elsewhere in France, Tommy has won every one's heart—every feminine heart at all events. He strolls about the town smoking his pipe,

playing with the children and dogs and settling his business in his own peculiar way, much preferring the language of signs to the help of interpreters, of whom there are plenty. Occasionally, the attractions of the café over-ride his better sense and make him forget Lord Kitchener's advice, and then he is severely punished; but, according to the Orleans people, he is a docile creature and extraordinarily good to look at. There are times when one feels that, unless he looks at himself in the glass, the English soldier will have his head turned in France; for we must own that—clean, smart, good man though he is—he is not always good-looking.

When the evening began to fall we went to the cathedral, the simplicity of which appealed to us, although it is not of great architectural value. The lights burned dimly in the aisles. The high altar was hung with black for a funeral. Kneeling figures, several of which were soldiers, crouched among the shadows, and in the Lady Chapel we saw an English soldier lighting candles at the *portecierges*. Very calmly and quietly he set five little tapers alight; and when all were burning

brightly he turned to the altar, bent his knee and returned to his *prie-dieu* where, with bent head, he remained for some moments. Then he rose, walked with military decision down the aisle, crossed himself with holy water at the entrance and again bent his knee, turning, this time, in the direction of the high altar. There was something very dignified in that simple soldierly ceremony, and many pairs of French eyes watched him with affectionate interest. There is little doubt but that they joined their prayers to his.

The quiet church, and the empty streets surrounding it, were soothing interludes to the noisy life of the Rue Royale and the crowded café of the Rotonde where the military world forgathered. We dined there and watched English and French officers discussing the evening news. There were many fine types of manhood among them. The Frenchmen, generally speaking, showed a more intelligently shaped head than the Englishman; but what the Englishman lacks in cleverness he makes up in steady courage and unfailing *sang-froid*. Like their men, the English officers appear quite unmoved by



THE ARMY SERVICE CORPS IN ORLEANS



external matters. They ask for a thing and they get it, whether they speak in French or English, for they come of a governing race. Their well-fitting uniforms, their pleasant English voices, their *grand air*, make up a good-looking whole. The Frenchmen also showed many smart well-groomed men among their number ; and particularly did we notice the many fine grey-bearded men of middle age who wore the uniform with immense distinction. Numbers of French private soldiers as well as officers were dining in the same room, little family parties of father, mother and son, or husband and wife ; and it must be owned that the untidy uniform of the *piou-piou* made a very poor effect among the brilliant tunics of the French officers and the neat khaki of our officers. We were interested in the shades of khaki as seen in the English and the Indian uniforms, and there are many decorative distinctions on the former which to the uninitiated are bewildering. It interested us to learn that touches of black signify the medical corps, touches of maroon the veterinary ; and we had the excitement of the native officer in his turban talking

University English with a grey-bearded, thin-faced Englishman.

Silvery mists heralded the next day, but the sunlight soon melted them; and as we walked down the Rue Royale, after breakfast, the cathedral towers and spires stood out with lace-like delicacy against the sky. At somebody's suggestion we walked out towards the British camp where we found the Royal Garrison Artillery. The sentry at the entrance was shy and monosyllabic, but he really saw no reason why we should not go in and see what there was to be seen; although, on the other hand, he could not imagine why on earth we wanted to see anything. So we went in after talking to a cross little French sentry and a nice French non-commissioned man. It was rather a dreary-looking place, as the guns were no longer there; and the only thing the men had to do, apparently, was to exercise a few heavy horses—'fresh from the plough I should say, sir,' said one of the men. The rest of the time they cooked and washed both themselves and their clothes. We talked with several of them and all were very good

specimens of the English working-man of the superior kind. Most of them were reservists, and one of them was a sailor who had been asked to join the army and come up with the guns. He was a typical sailor, with the clear eye of the man who has looked out to far horizons and the indescribable seaman's air. He was keen on 'blowing up Berlin,' and the only thing that he did not like about his part in the war was the leaving of his wife and children. 'We are all like that!' said another man; 'and we do find it a bit hard that we can't even tell our missus where we are.'

They showed us photographs of their wives and children, and one of us photographed them in groups and singly. The childlike confidence of the English soldier may possibly make him good game for the German spy, but I doubt it. He is very instinctive and observant, even though delightfully unsuspecting. Personally, I would trust him to detect a spy quicker than a Frenchman, in spite of the intelligence and alertness to danger which the Frenchman always shows.

It was pleasant to hear these tried soldiers

paying tribute to 'Kitchener's New Army' and to the Boy Scouts. 'Oh, the Boy Scouts, they're bloomin' marvels. Anybody comes to us and asks us anything when we was at Woolwich we always says to 'em, "Go and ask the Boy Scouts; we don't know, but they will!" And I tell you what—it don't do nobody any good to go and play games on the Boy Scouts, for they may get 'urt. There was a chap as went foolin' and pretendin' to be a German, and they mauled him that bad he had to be taken to hospital, and all he got for his game was "Serve you right!" from the doctors and nurses. Oh, I tell you, the Boy Scouts is somebody with us.'

In the afternoon we went out to the Indian camp at Cercottes. We reached it in the late afternoon, when the mists were making the woods look sleepy and the sky was all grey and silver with a haze of blue. The camp, set on a wide and dusty plateau, melted into the scheme of Western colouring with extraordinary softness, and, for all its Indian colouring, was completely in harmony with the scene.

As far as we could see, both before and

around us, lay the tents; not bell-shaped but oblong, with triangular openings framed with lances set crossways. The dusty brown canvas of which they were made was lined with green or yellow in different shades, so that when the flaps were turned back a flash of colour happened. On one side, away in the distance, was the rifle range, from which came a sharp rattle of musketry. The supply stores lay behind us, and everywhere was the same brown, dusty colouring, with bright notes to lift it out of monotony. Little cooking-fires burned cheerily through all the lines, and the curling smoke which rose from them added to the mysterious beauty of the hour, even as the scent of burning wood in the nostrils accentuated the impression of the scene so deliberately, that when, in imagination, we see it again, a whiff of burning wood will come with the dream.

Groups of graceful Indian figures fell into unconsciously beautiful attitudes round each little fire, and the cooking-vessels of brass and copper were all of shapes and shades to please the æsthetic senses. The brown skins of the men toned in with the dusty browns

of the camp, and their bright eyes and white teeth were as the glinting lights on their copper cooking-pots. Even the khaki in which their native dress is made melts into the general harmony, and the insertions of bright colour in the turbans of the non-commissioned men only serve to emphasise the dominant sobriety. In camp, the full khaki tunic, which falls to the knees, is set aside, and the grey flannel shirt is worn outside the breeches, much as a French boy wears his black school-pinafore. A warm knitted jersey is sometimes worn over it, for the days are already cold as well as the nights; and although most of them were of quiet grey, some were in bright orange or purple. Even the khaki putties look graceful on the Indian soldiers; for they fold them round their supple limbs with the same delicate precision as they fold the classical turban round their heads. Everything about them expresses grace, soft movement, and docility. There is nothing fierce or warlike about these men in peace, although one never doubts their soldierly qualities, and only to see a dignified Sikh sergeant salute his English

officer is enough to convince one of the splendid discipline of the troops.

The young soldiers in their fatigue dress look like slender girls ; and the soft, questioning gaze of their dark eyes as they look on Western faces has also something womanly in it. The Bengal Lancers are extraordinarily graceful, and suggest fine steel blades. The Sikhs are dignity personified, and in them all, as among other types we could not identify, we found always the same suggestion of docile obedience allied to something mysteriously aloof and reserved. The soft grace of their figures finds an equivalent in the soft melody of their tongue ; and it was noticeable that when they were talking with their English officers the Englishmen also lowered their voices and spoke with the same gentle emphasis as the native. The only grotesque note in the camp was, oddly enough, struck by the dignified Sikhs, who, as age comes on and their black beards are touched with silver, dye them a bright auburn, sometimes all the beard, sometimes only in patches. The effect is most weird and quite incongruous.

Graceful boys of very tender years have

come over with the ambulances or with the kitchens, and in their youth and light-heartedness are very pleasant to see and hear. One came to have his photograph taken, a delightful study in brown, with the most dazzlingly white teeth imaginable. 'How old are you?' asked an English officer. The boy replied that he was ten. 'Impossible!' said the officer, 'you must be more than that!' With charming grace the boy said quickly: 'By your honour's permission, I am now twelve!' Obviously it is given to an English officer to bestow years upon his Majesty's Indian subjects, although the Bible tells us it is not given to any one of us to add a cubit to our own stature.

The watering of horses and mules in the evening is one of the most picturesque sights of the day's work in the Indian camp. It is a picturesque confusion of men and beasts. The little mules trotted off with the same apparent docility as their masters—they looked fit and well. The horses, too, looked in good condition, and their riders sat them with that supple grace which seems to make of horse and man one being. They crowded

through an exit from the camp, across a dusty road, and along a narrow pathway through a little wood which led to a pond. The coloured jerseys made bright bits of colour among the dusky brown figures, and the khaki turban was here and there replaced by one in vivid blue or red or purple wound round the head and half-covering the face, as is the way in the East when the sun goes down and the mists begin to come up. A murmur of tongues went on all the time, with occasional high notes, which, like bright notes of colour, lifted the whole harmony from dullness or monotony.

Nothing is wanting to the Indian troops in their camp, and all that is theirs is rigorously kept apart from the effects of the British troops. They admire each other from a distance, and respect each other's customs with courtesy. The Indian cooks ply their clever art in their own way; the Indian printers have their printing-tents in their own lines, and from them they send out the printed orders; the Indian ambulance has its own doctors and orderlies, although the treatment is the same as that bestowed

on the English soldiers. The camps of the two armies are in every way distinct. They think apart and they live apart, although they both fight for the same King and the same cause. It is a wonderful occasion, this landing of our Indian troops, and a solemn one, heavy with responsibilities, and magnificent with possibilities for progress.

Looking back on our visit to the Indian camp, I am immensely impressed by the dignity of it all. These Eastern people have a way of doing simple things which endows the most ordinary action with beauty. A mule-cart, on its way to buy milk or fruit at a neighbouring town, is glorified by the dignified pose of the Sikh who walks in front with noiseless tread and lean brown hands always in motion at his sides, showing curiously white nails. In the cart sits another native, or perhaps two, and behind it walks another. They pass on their way quite unobtrusively, showing no sign of being conscious of the attention they attract. They buy what they need without knowing a word of the country's language, and they pay in Indian money. They are never flustered, and they never



INDIAN SOLDIERS AT THE CERCOTTES CAMP



make a noise. In their camp there is the same feeling of serenity; and although they move at a great pace, they never give any impression of haste. The English officers add to the dignity of the scene by their orderly simplicity. They sleep in tents just big enough to allow of a sleeping-bag and one chair, and their mess-tent has a plank table and a row of boxes for seats. To put it briefly, a splendid spirit is abroad, and among both officers and men in our Indian troops it is exercising high influence.

## THE RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS

*October 1914.*—When the poplars were turning gold along the river banks and the schools and colleges had announced the beginning of their winter term, Paris began to fill up again; and the calm and quiet which had reigned in the streets for some weeks gave way to a relative activity. But Paris is still a sober city, unhurried by day, and darkly silent by night; no cafés, no amusements of any kind, no absinthe, and always the searchlights swinging across the sky and running races with the clouds.

The battle of the Aisne is going on as I write, and a week ago we had two visits from German aeroplanes, one of which dropped twenty bombs, killing several people and injuring others, as well as damaging slightly Notre-Dame. The second Taube aimed at the Gare du Nord, and actually dropped a

bomb in the station, but without any result. The Parisians were exceedingly wroth about those two aeroplanes being allowed to fly over Paris, and since then there have been changes in the corps of flying men which is supposed to watch over the city. The story goes that they were all taking a holiday except one, and he had to be implored and exhorted to go up for the honour of his corps and to satisfy the public. How far this story is exact I cannot say; but it is all too true that the French temperament has always been inclined to make those little mistakes. It rises to an occasion with godlike competence and courage; but a sustained effort, until General Joffre took command, has been as little in its conception of war as was the necessity of methodical organisation in military hospitals. All French authorities get slack unless they are kept on the *qui vive*, and it is possible that those twenty bombs saved Paris from a worse disaster.

I heard a Frenchman say the other day that the finest victory of the war, so far, was that of the French people over their own nerves. Never, in all her history, has France

been asked to endure what she has endured since the beginning of August; yet—and it is Lord Kitchener who said it—never have her soldiers fought as they have fought during the last few weeks. On the civilian side we may also say that never have the Parisians been put to such tests either. From the first day of mobilisation until this, the seventy-seventh day of the war, the citizens of Paris have been asked to do almost the impossible. They have had the Germans at their very gates—they have been kept in ignorance of the truth for weeks on end—they have heard rumours that were awful enough to turn an army, they have had their Governor changed at a critical moment, fortunately—they have seen ministerial changes—they have watched all the well-to-do people of the city, including the Government, leave hastily. But they themselves have never wavered for an instant. We, the bourgeoisie, have always said that the great danger to Paris was a revolution among the working-classes, the mob! We were proved wrong, the mob stood steady when the bourgeoisie did not.

The reading of letters from the front is the most popular recreation in these days, and it is pathetic to see how worn and torn a letter gets as it travels about with its owner to be read many times over, aloud and in silence, until another comes to take its place. Most of these letters are remarkable for their simplicity. The writers make no attempt at literature or heroics, but they all tell of little intimate things in their inimitable French way—a way that is subtly witty but rarely broadly humorous. A description of what they are doing at the time, a laughing promise to tell wonderful stories when they come home, affectionate messages to the family, thanks for parcels, and through all and everything a cheerful acceptance of their own particular work in the war. No waving of the flag, no screeching patriotism or envenomed raging against the enemy, but the most admirable confidence in their own arms and a determination to hold on until victory comes to France. ‘*Dieu aime que nous nous donnions avec gaieté*’ is what some one said; and surely the soldiers, French and English, are men after God’s own heart!

We were asked to dine with two men one evening this week who were to join their regiments on the following day. One was a Serbian who had fought in eighteen campaigns already and who, not being able to get back to his own country, had joined the Foreign Legion in Paris. Some one brought him the news, as we were dining, that he had been gazetted lieutenant and congratulations were warm. He was a terrible fighter, that Serbian, and his gestures as he talked of the *Alboches*, and all he was going to do to those he came into contact with, were realistic. The other guest of the evening was a Roumanian studying medicine in Paris. He had joined the French Hussars and his pale-blue tunic with cherry-coloured breeches was extremely attractive, too attractive to German bullets it is feared, and it caused a chill to strike one's heart when the boy said, 'Look on the second page of the *Echo de Paris* for my name when I am at the front!' Every one did all they could to cheer him; for he was going with plenty of courage, but no conviction of coming back. He talked of his mother whom he could not see, who did not even

know that he was going, and his half-gay, half-resentful way of putting things struck a painful note all through the evening. The low brown room of the restaurant with its grotesque paintings, the smoky atmosphere and the strange gathering of men and women, will always stay with me as something very significant of Paris during the war, when people met together in all sorts of unexpected places. There was a French playwright, several English journalists, an English judge from West Africa, and two Englishwomen. Every one talked round the war, no one said anything that really mattered—people rarely do nowadays, for words seem of so little account. We wait on actions, and by them our future is being worked out. A big man, with a passion for sailing round mud-banks at the mouth of the Thames, showed extraordinary social talents when international relations became strained. I suppose that avoiding mud-banks teaches tact. One of the two Englishwomen sat between her husband and the French playwright, looking like a Gainsborough picture out of its frame, with both men to see that no harm should happen

to it. The judge from West Africa was equally *dépaysé*, and you felt afraid that his conclusions might result in a very severe verdict on the frivolity of every one present. An atmosphere of Tudoresque literature hung over him, and Velasquez would not have despised him as a model. He was versed in old customs and was given to rumination, and to have learned what he thought about Paris in war time would have interested me greatly. In times of peace, this little brown room is said to be a scene of gay revelry to which a man does not take his wife. In time of war it is a homely, quiet eating-house, with a big white placard hanging on one of its walls, which asks in large black letters for 'tricots pour nos soldats,' and the *patronne*, a woman of generous proportions, told us that she had already sent off two or three big bundles. At half-past nine, the room is empty and all the windows are darkened. Outside, the footsteps of two policemen echo loudly as they pass on their nightly round; for Montmartre, like the rest of Paris, keeps provincial hours under martial law.

We spent an interesting afternoon at a

railway station one day this month and learned a good deal of what the work has been on the lines round Paris since the war began. At this particular station the organisation has been good, and the wounded who have passed through have been well looked after. An English army sister was installed on one of the platforms with all that was necessary for the dressing of wounds and for the providing of refreshing drinks and nourishment. When a troop train came through, she was ready with bread, matches, tobacco, and warm drinks for the tired soldiers; and when an ambulance train was signalled, she was prepared with the necessary hospital remedies. One of the interesting things she told us, among many others, was that it had been her experience to find that the wounds which had been left with their first dressings on were in a better state than those which had been re-dressed *en route*. And it was her opinion that if they could be packed up, and not re-dressed until they were safe in hospital, there would be less danger of germs getting in them. She was a small, slim woman with kind eyes and clever hands, and she made

a pleasant sight on the dusty platform, with her white cap, grey and scarlet uniform, and her inimitable professional deftness. The soldiers showed their appreciation of her care by a prompt 'Thank you, Sister,' and a military salute. We, too, thanked her for tea and bread and butter, which she administered to us with the same delightful ease as if she were in her own hospital sitting-room. She had transformed a wooden shed into an orderly ward kitchen; and there was a bunch of fresh flowers in a jug, set on a small white cloth, which looked home-like and feminine. 'A French soldier gave me those,' she said, 'and I give him a cup of tea every afternoon.' On the opposite side of the line the French Red Cross had set up its stall of provisions. Several nurses in uniform stood and sat with knitting in their hands waiting for the trains to come in, and the English soldiers who were billeted in the station benefited largely by their generosity. Hot coffee, milk, bread, and other luxuries were willingly offered to the khaki men; and it was amusing to hear the broken English and French which made up

the conversation between the *Dames de la Croix Rouge* and the Tommies.

Another striking figure and dominant personality of the station was that of the English chaplain, a man who has played many parts since the beginning of the war, and played them all well. He has acted as British transport officer, station-master for the English, and interpreter for the two armies. He has been stretcher-bearer for the Red Cross, and has given spiritual comfort to Catholic and Protestant alike. The *pantallons rouges* are as dear to him as the khaki putties, and he has worked for England and France with equal fervour. Above the belt, his costume is mildly clerical; below the belt, it is suggestive of a country squire. His ruddy face and keen eyes are also reminiscent of that fast disappearing species, the sporting parson, and there is a mellow sound about his voice and a touch of the unorthodox about his speech which make him somewhat of a trial to the 'genteel' mind. To the soldier such qualities are in his favour and it was pleasant to see the good-fellowship

between him and them. Since the war he has had a great deal of experience with English soldiers; and although he knew them pretty well before, having been military chaplain in his younger days, he had never had to deal with the men in war time and in a foreign country. 'They are all good fellows, but they are sometimes difficult to deal with' was his conclusion, and he told us of a few of Tommy's eccentricities. 'He will sit anywhere but *in* the train: the roof, the steps, the engine-buffers—anywhere you like—but not on the seat of a carriage. The consequence is, accidents are always happening to him—sometimes very serious ones. One man had fallen from the roof of a carriage and had broken his thigh. Another was killed in a tunnel; and many of them, after falling from a dangerous perch, had limped into the station hours after their train had left, to ask in injured tones 'Where's my train?'

Sometimes they get thoroughly out of hand, and then there is trouble. One little group escaped from the station and hid in a café, with dire results to themselves; for the

chaplain has drastic methods of treating inebriate soldiers. He makes them drink strong doses of coffee and salt, and they quickly become very repentant and full of good resolutions. The worst case was at a station down the line, when a train-load of Irishmen had to be kept in their carriages by the town guard. 'But on the whole they have been good fellows all the way through, and they have had to do a great deal of very hard work.' The French transport officer at the station was also an understanding man, and between him and the chaplain both French and English soldiers have been very fairly treated. Both men know just when to shut their eyes and the result has been most satisfactory; for there have been no complaints either at or about this very busy station. A great number of wounded have passed through and the hospitals of the town have received some of the worst cases from the front. In the beginning, lockjaw and gangrene were all too common; but lately there has been much less of both. The chaplain has helped many brave men to cross the borderland since the war began, and he has had to listen to the

delirium of many men fresh from the firing line. How grim that task can be he knows to the full, and the men he has tried to help know how gentle he can be under the stress of a task as hard, in its way, as their own.

All the dogs of the neighbourhood know the chaplain; and in his own home, at the present moment, he is sheltering a dozen or more who were forgotten by their masters and mistresses when the town was threatened by a German invasion. There is a big pointer who nearly died of a broken heart and sat waiting on the station platform for many days, refusing food and moaning sadly all the time. He is only just beginning to forget, and that under the constant coaxing of the chaplain. There is a white woolly creature, of no particular race, who looks as if he might have been meant for a lamb to begin with; and there is a most fascinating little brown animal, rather like a dog and very much like a squirrel, who refuses to be given away, although the chaplain has found him more than one good home. Fox-terriers, pugs, and mongrels of many degrees keep the chaplain from being dull, and the spoiled

darling of the household never leaves him. She is a short-haired little dog, very fat, named Fifi, and she must have been in a circus or a music-hall before she was found by the chaplain's wife during the floods of 1910; for she generally walks on her hind legs and paws the air with her front ones in a very music-hall manner. At the head of the staircase, a hastily mounted gate bars the way to these orphaned, four-footed victims of the war, but Fifi is allowed free access to the rooms which lie beyond, even to the chaplain's study. When all the swallows have come back, some of the dogs may prove to be less orphaned than they are at present.

## PARIS THEN AND NOW

I CAME across a description of Paris in 1870 the other day which might easily stand for a picture of Paris in 1914. It was written by the witty, flippant pen of Mr. Labouchere, who, during the siege, was acting as special correspondent to the *Daily News*. Apparently, Imperial Paris was very like Republican Paris. The same charm, the same follies, the same extravagances, were common to society; and only the working-classes seem to have made any progress towards the better lines of civilisation. In the winter of 1870 he wrote :

‘Landlords and tenants are as much at loggerheads here as they are in Ireland; the Government has issued three decrees to regulate the question. By the first is suspended all judicial proceedings on the part of landlords for their rent; by the second, it granted a delay of three months to all

persons unable to pay the October term ; by the third, it required all those who wished to profit by the second to make a declaration of inability to pay before a magistrate. To-day a fourth decree has been issued, again suspending the October term, and making the three previous decrees applicable to the January term, but giving to landlords a right to dispute the truth of the allegation of poverty on the part of their tenants ; the question is a very serious one, for on the payments of rents depends, directly or indirectly, the means of livelihood of half the nation. Thus the landlords say that, if the tenants do not pay them, they cannot pay the interest of the mortgages on their properties. If this interest be not paid, however, the shareholders of the *Crédit Foncier* and other mortgage banks get nothing. Paris, under the fostering care of the Emperor, had become, next to St. Petersburg, the dearest capital in Europe. Its prosperity was artificial and was dependent upon a long chain of connecting links remaining unbroken. In the industrial quarters money was made by the manufacture of *articles de Paris*, and for

these, as soon as the communications are reopened, there will be the same market as heretofore. As a city of pleasure, however, its prosperity must depend, like a huge watering-place, upon its being able to attract strangers. If they do not return, a reduction of prices will take place, which will ruin most of the shopkeepers, proprietors of houses, and hotel-keepers; but this, although unpleasant to individuals, would be to the advantage of the world at large. Extravagance in Paris makes extravagance the fashion everywhere; under the Empire, to spend money was the readiest road to social distinction. The old bourgeoisie still retained the careful habits of the days of Louis Philippe, and made fortunes by cheese-paring. Imperial Paris was far above this. Families were obliged to spend 20 per cent. of their incomes in order to lodge themselves; shops in favoured quarters were let for fabulous prices, and charged fabulous prices for their wares. Cocodettes of the Court, cocottes of the Bois, wives of speculators, shoddy squaws from New York, Calmucks recently imported from their native steppes,

doubtful Italian princesses, gushing Polish countesses, and foolish Englishwomen, merrily raced along the road to ruin. Good taste was lost in tinsel and glitter, what a thing cost was the only standard of its beauty. Great gingerbread palaces were everywhere run up, and let even before they were out of the builder's hands. It was deemed fashionable to drive about with a carriage with four horses, with perhaps a black man to drive, and an Arab sitting on the box by his side. Dresses by milliners in vogue gave a ready currency to their wearers. The Raphael of his trade gave himself the airs of a distinguished artist; he received his clients with vulgar condescension, and they, no matter what their rank, submitted to his insolence in the hope that he would enable them to outshine their rivals. Ambassadors' wives and Court ladies used to go to take tea with the fellow and dispute the honour of filling his cup or putting sugar in it. I once went into his shop, a sort of drawing-room hung round with dresses; I found him lolling on a chair, his legs crossed before the fire. Around him were a bevy of women, some

pretty, some ugly, listening to his observations with the rapt attention of the disciples of a sage. He called them up before him like schoolgirls, and, after inspecting them, praised or blamed their dresses. One, a pretty young girl, found favour in his eyes, and he told her that he must dream and meditate several days over her, in order to find the inspiration to make a gown worthy of her. "Why do you wear those ugly gloves?" he said to another, "never let me see you in gloves of that colour again." She was a very grand lady; but she slipped off her gloves, and put them in her pocket with a guilty look. When there was going to be a ball at Court, ladies used to go down on their knees to him to make them beautiful. For some time he declined to dress any longer the wife of a great imperial dignitary who had not been sufficiently humble towards him; she came to him in tears, but he was obdurate and he only consented at last to make a gown for her on the condition that she would put it on for the first time in his shop. The Empress, who dealt with him, sent to tell him that if he did not abate his

prices, she would leave him. "You cannot," he replied; and in fact she could not, for she stood by him to the last. A morning dress by this artist, worth in reality about £4, cost £30; an evening gown, tawdry with flounces, ribbons and bad lace, could not be had under £70. There are about thirty shops in Paris where, as at this man-milliner's, the goods are no better than elsewhere, but they cost about ten times their value. They are patronised by fools with more money than wits, and chiefly by foreign fools. The proprietor of one of these establishments was complaining to me the other day of what he was losing by the siege; I told him that I sympathised with him about as much as I should with a Greek brigand bewailing a falling off of wealthy strangers in the district where he was in the habit of carrying on his commercial operations. The only tradesmen in Paris who are making a good thing out of their country's misfortunes are the liquor sellers and the grocers.'

With very few modifications beyond those which fashion has brought us, this is Paris as we knew it before the war of 1914. It is

still the dearest capital in the world, and it is doubtful if Petrograd should be excepted. Extravagance and folly continue to mark its smart cosmopolitan society, and the man-milliner is still a power in the land; only he has increased and multiplied to such a dangerous extent that he now rules over all classes and all nations. He gives tango teas and costume balls, and hides his mercantile spirit under a hundred clever devices. He combines the business of an *antiquaire* with that of a dressmaker, and he pursues both in the most princely houses of the city. Queens and Empresses are not such favourite *clientes* with him as the wives of millionaires or popular actresses, and his prices are as uniformly high as his manners are superior. Landlords and tenants are waging war just now as they did forty-four years ago; and, since the war, the Government has issued the same decrees about the payment of rent as it did in 1870. Victims under these decrees cry out against them just as they did in the old days, and there is the same abuse of the privileges as there was hitherto. We know the rents were reduced as much as 25 per cent. in

1871, and we fully expect the same thing will happen after this war. The joy we shall all feel at seeing the prices reduced everywhere will be balanced by the inconvenience we shall experience in the increase of taxation; and the expected boom in trade will be more than counteracted by the debts we shall have incurred during these unproductive months.

Another writer of 1870, Mr. Gibson Bowles, who was correspondent for the *Morning Post* during the siege, throws many strange lights on the Paris of his time. He belonged to one of the best clubs of the day and tells many anecdotes heard among the club members. One man half-laughingly complains that his serjeant is his concierge in times of peace, and it is boring to ask him for permission to come and dine in town. Another complains that his serjeant rather bullies him because he bears him a grudge: 'My cook would not buy poultry from him before the war, and now he wreaks his vengeance on me.' The most interesting of all is the picture we get, from this writer, of the Parisian workman of 1870:

‘ He no longer rises early to spend his day in toil, all he has to do is to attend to National Guard drill, to mount his guard twice a week, and to walk about in his uniform. For this he gets fifteenpence a day, while his wife receives from the *mairie* tenpence a day for herself and fivepence for each of her children. With these sums they can live in comparative comfort and are better off in all respects than they were in time of peace. The idle, flashy life which results from this system is quite to the taste of the Parisian workman, but it has developed some of his latent vices to an extraordinary extent. Nobody, for instance, will do any work. The Government, which offers six francs a day for unskilled labour, finds it impossible to get men even at this rate; and private employers are even worse off, so that, for instance, a bootmaker requires a month to make a pair of boots and will not absolutely promise them then. Idleness and drunkenness always go together, and I suppose there never was a time when the latter vice was so common in Paris. The National Guards are drunk upon the ramparts, the workmen drunk all about

the streets, and even the *cochers de fiacre* are drunk on their boxes to an extent that is really astonishing. It is the thirty sous pay that does it all. They are so easily earned, and it is so pleasing to carry them off to the wine-shop. . . .’

The workman of to-day is much more serious than his ancestor. We grumble a great deal about him, and he grumbles a great deal about us; but at least he has behaved well since the war. He has been quiet and orderly, hard-working, when he was able to get work to do, and desperately serious about the war. In 1870 there were many more workmen left in Paris than there are to-day; and to-day, if we have to wait for our boots, it is simply because there are so few men left to work on them. Several writers of 1870 have said that the workmen need not have suffered want during the siege if they had chosen to work, and they declare that the only real sufferers were the poor women and children who were neglected by their menkind. To-day this is not at all the case: men and women have worked and suffered alike, so far. They have also

benefited about equally ; for the women have received State aid and the men are being helped to find work.

The theatres never quite closed in 1870 : the Opéra provided music at intervals, and patriotic plays were given ; but as time went on, and the situation grew obviously serious, the lighter and more amusing elements of Parisian life were set on one side. The cafés kept open as long as they could afford enough light, people dined and chattered and boasted. Pleasure, in fact, died hard.

Another identical point, between 1870 and 1914, is the position in which English residents in Paris found themselves in regard to their own embassy and consulate. Mr. Bowles put the case of 1870 in this way :

‘ I don’t know how it strikes Englishmen in England or whether it has yet struck them at all ; but to Englishmen in Paris it seems the most extraordinary and monstrous thing that we alone of all the nationalities here present should be utterly without any official person whatever to look after us and our interests in case of need. I speak advisedly when I say that, of all European nations

(and I may include most of the Asiatic and South American), England is the only one whose representatives have packed up bag and baggage and gone off to a man, without making any provisions for their fellow-subjects. Several countries have left their Minister. Those that have not done that have left a consul, a secretary of legation, or an attaché; and Portugal, which is the only power whose representatives have gone away altogether, has handed her subjects over to the protection of the United States. English diplomacy alone has reserved for itself the shameful distinction of having entirely deserted its post, at a time when, of all others, it might have been of any use, without giving a thought or taking a step in behalf of those whom it has left behind. Ambassadors, secretaries, attachés, even the consul . . . all have fled and left, as sole representative of Great Britain, the porter of the embassy.'

In 1914, history repeated itself with but slight modifications due to different circumstances. The Embassy, for example, had no choice whether it should go or stay when

the French Government decided to move to Bordeaux. But the consulate was a different matter. It should have remained open, whereas it closed quite early in the dangerous days, thus leaving English people in Paris without any official representative of the nation to whom they could apply for help or information. But for the efficiency and hard work of the English clergy, who never dreamed of leaving their posts, the position of many stranded English subjects would have been worse than it was. The clergy shared the honours with the officials of the American Embassy in helping British subjects with advice, money and information, and it is entirely due to them that the thousands of poor residents in Paris did not starve or have to fall back on French charities. They organised relief societies and collected money with promptitude and common sense, the result being that there is a probability that the distress in the English colony will not be beyond powers of relief, even though the winter be hard and the war long. Without their intervention, the case would have been very different.

The material position of the Parisians in 1914 compares very favourably with the position of those who went through 1870. Then, there was famine, or something very like it, bad administration, revolution and isolation. Added to anguish of mind there was bodily hunger and a thousand minor inconveniences. The gas would be cut off without any warning, and people had to go about with lanterns, water was scarce and fuel of any kind was at one time non-existent. It was bitterly cold and no provision was made to supply the people with the wherewithal to warm themselves, with the result that they turned out in bands and helped themselves to palings round waste ground, to old scaffoldings, to trees in private gardens ; to anything, in fact, which was get-at-able. Finally, the Government caused a supply of timber from the woods of Vincennes and the Bois de Boulogne to be brought in, and the raiding ceased. We have had nothing like that to contend with yet. Our gas, our electric light, our coal even, is accorded us regularly if sparingly, and we have not suffered from want of food at all. Our

meat is drawn from the cold-storage rooms, and except that we pay more dearly for almost everything, we have nothing to grumble about.

By the help of Mr. Gibson Bowles, we may also observe the English journalists of forty-four years ago, and compare them with those of to-day. Mr. Bowles describes his *confrères*, and himself as well we must presume, as forming 'one of the most amusing of all the strange sets of people here. The *Daily News* especially,' he says, 'has shown great qualities. From a commanding bedroom in the Grand Hotel, he views with unmoved courage all the fighting that takes place, and being thus always on the spot, is able to recount with every detail the incidents that occur at a distance of not more than seven or eight miles off. From another commanding chamber, which under certain circumstances might be almost under fire, the *Pall Mall Gazette* philosophises over principles of government, mutton cutlets, and the abuse of the Geneva Cross; while the *Standard* is understood to have enrolled himself in the *sapeurs-pompiers*, and to hold himself ready to put out fires at all hours of the day and

night. Meantime, the *Daily Telegraphs* have become invisible, though I saw one of them at the attack on Le Bourget, with an ambulance card stuck in his hat, precisely as if he were basking in imperial favour in the *enceinte du pesage* of a race meeting. It is *The Times*, however, who chiefly excites my admiration and envy. He rides about, insecurely on a horse, or securely in a brougham, covered with Geneva crosses, and in a gorgeous uniform with a violet velvet collar and a kepi covered with gold lace and embroidery. I thought he was a field-marshal at least, when first I saw this splendour; but I find he is orderly officer to the Bishop of Sumatra. Fancy *The Times* riding about after a converted bishop!

It would be difficult to locate the many English newspaper men who have written on the war to-day. Even the recognised Paris correspondents have led a cinematographic existence, and many of them have been arrested by friends and foes alike. They have ridden in nothing securely, whether motor-car, train, aeroplane, or balloon. Nothing that they counted theirs have they been

able to keep ; cars and bicycles have all been requisitioned. Like Yellow Dog Dingo they have kept running because they 'had to,' and their lot has not been enviable. The very name 'journalist' makes a soldier impolite, and although the public reads nothing else but newspapers, it smites the hand which feeds it. I can only compare the position of an English war correspondent in the present war to that of a German soldier : his paper drives him forward and the army drives him back, and he stands between two fires, either of which is scorching. From this position he has to satisfy the public and pass the censor. Never has the power of the Press been more limited or more effective. M. Maurice Barrès and M. de Mun were rocks of strength to France when things were not going well. M. Hervé and M. Clémenceau struck some good blows for their country in the beginning of the war, and England has fed thousands of hungry French minds with news from her papers since hostilities began. *The Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *Daily Chronicle*, and the *Daily Mail* supply most of the news to the Paris dailies ; and

the French writers of renown supply leading articles which in some cases are gems of literature. Besides M. Barrès and M. de Mun, whose death may be looked upon as a disaster to the country, there is M. Paul Bourget, M. René Bazin, M. Abel Hermant, and other *littérateurs* as well known, all of whom are writing inspiring articles for the morning papers at the present time.

Spies were almost as much feared in 1870 as they are to-day. 'Every day persons are arrested because they are supposed by lighted candles and other mysterious devices to be signalling to the enemy.' Even the men who caught the spies were convicted, later, of being spies themselves; and any foreigner, no matter how 'in order' might be his papers, was liable to arrest. The ambulances, the headquarters, the ranks, were all bristling with spies, and suspicion lurked in everybody's mind. There was even crying abuse of the Red Cross in 1870, and the slaughter of women and children was, apparently, not unknown. Even then the Prussian terrorised, when he might be said to be on his best behaviour—for he was winning, and

he had not the world against him as he has to-day.

It is interesting to read the flippant criticisms of Mr. Labouchere on the Germans and the rôle he thought they were likely to play in Europe; it is also interesting to find that he was hopelessly wrong in his conclusions. He says :

‘It is impossible so to adapt the equilibrium of power that every great European Power shall be co-equal in strength. The balance tips now on the side of Germany. That country has attained the unity after which she has long sighed and I do not think she will embroil the Continent in wars waged for conquest, for an ‘idea,’ or for the dynastic interests of her princes. The Germans are a brave race, but not a war-loving race, and . . . I console myself with the thought that the result of the present war will be to consolidate peace.’

Here again is a point of identity between 1870 and 1914; for we, too, console ourselves with the thought that the benefit of our present sufferings will be reaped by future generations in a stable and enduring peace.

## IN AND ABOUT THE PARIS HOSPITALS

IN an amazingly short space of time after the war broke out, Paris bristled with hospitals and *ouvroirs*. Almost all the hotels and schools flew the Red Cross flag and a great many luxurious private houses were put at the disposition of the Government. The directors of the *magasins de nouveautés* and the dressmakers also followed in the same wake, and half the women in the city inscribed themselves as members of the Red Cross societies, and willing to serve 'at the front.' Arm bands and Red Cross uniforms were worn by all sorts and conditions, until the military authorities had to interfere and make strict rules on the subject.

It was generally supposed that the Red Cross societies were well equipped to meet the demands of war, and in the early days,

before there was any rush of wounded, it looked as if their plans were working well. Ambulances went to the front with all the eagerness and despatch of the troops themselves; and every one said that there would be none of the difficulties of 1870 to contend with, as the country was prepared with the necessary hospital appliances. Briefly, the story of the French Red Cross societies is this.

The Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires was founded in 1866, the Association des Dames Françaises in 1879, and the Union des Femmes de France in 1881. All these societies are recognised by the military authorities, as well as by the civil administrations; and the good work they do is beyond question. They are united under a central committee, and the President of the Republic is president-in-chief; but they each work separately and have their own officers. The Société de Secours aux Blessés Militaires, which has its central office in the Rue François Premier, is recognised as the most aristocratic of the three branches, and its president is the Comte de Vogué, with the Comtesse d'Haussonville as president of

the ladies' committee. The Dames Françaises expresses the Government *milieu*, and has five presidents: Mme. Casimir-Périer, Mme. Félix Faure, Mme. Loubet, Mme. Fallières, and Mme. Poincaré. The central office is in the Rue Gaillon. The Union des Femmes de France was founded by Mme. Koechlin-Schwartz, who is the president of the society. The central office is in the Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, and among the ladies who work actively on the committee are many well-known Parisiennes of the rich bourgeoisie. Inevitably there is a good deal of snobbism connected with these societies, and political intrigue is not without its importance in their ranks. But in spite of such drawbacks, the work done by all three branches is good, and without them the needs of to-day would have been infinitely greater. They are very rich, and they have provided a stupendous amount of material for the soldiers during the war. Their hospitals and their *ouvroirs* are everywhere; and their nurses and stretcher-bearers have found death by their devotion in several instances since the war began.

It is under the protection of the Red Cross

that all the auxiliary Paris hospitals have been opened, and the principal *ouvroirs* have also been under the patronage of one or other of the three branches. For many weeks Paris might have been called a Red Cross city; for there was not a street or an avenue which did not proclaim itself as the proud possessor of at least one hospital, *ouvroir*, or storehouse for soldiers' comforts. The Champs Elysées, the Rue de Rivoli, the Place Vendôme, are still great hospital centres. Most of the hotels have at one time or another taken in wounded, and some of them are likely to be hospitals until the war is far advanced. The Astoria is an important British Red Cross hospital which is also militarised and has more than 500 beds. The Majestic has been busy; Claridge's has been run by women doctors from London; Meurice's, the Continental, the Ritz, were all occupied at one time by wounded; and the Bristol, where kings and diplomats have been used to dine and discuss, has been run as a most luxurious 'ambulance' by Mme. Ida Rubenstein, the actress.

The lycées have also been used a great deal as hospitals and one of the most perfectly

equipped for the purpose is the Lycée Pasteur at Neuilly, which is run entirely by the Americans in Paris. It was given over to them by the French Government early in the war, and within three weeks they converted it into a model modern hospital. It is interesting to note that in 1870 the American ambulance was quoted as doing the best work among the wounded, and in 1914 it has not gone back on its traditions. The hospital could if necessary take in 1000 patients, and it is provided with a full staff of doctors, nurses, and officers of all kinds. It is no form of speech to say that 'money is no object' with the Americans who run the American ambulance: for they have spent it lavishly and wisely, at the same time.

Two dressmakers only were ambitious to turn their carpeted salons into hospital wards and their *vendeuses* into nurses; but many of these rich *commerçants* converted their rooms into *ouvroirs* and employed their workwomen to sew for the soldiers, thus rendering admirable service to the army and the State at one and the same time. The big shops also worked well for the same cause; and it was a curious sight to see the Printemps, the Louvre, the

Bon Marché and other huge stores turned into sewing-rooms. Haversacks, bandages, cholera belts, shirts, were turned out in thousands in those early days, and the hum of the sewing-machines was mighty. A great many ground-floor shops were turned into *ouvroirs* where the women were paid from one to two francs for the afternoon's work. Piles and piles of hospital materials were emmassed by these means, and the distribution is still going on.

As long as Paris was in danger of investment very few wounded came in, but once the city was looked upon as comparatively safe the hospitals filled up rapidly. Terrible stories have been told of the miseries the wounded have been forced to endure through the failure of the *services sanitaires* to transport them quickly from the field of action to a hospital. Tetanus and gangrene have killed far too many of our soldiers, and they have all too often lost limbs through the same causes. It is undeniable that the wounded have been put into cattle-trucks, more or less clean, on to straw that is full of germs, that they have lain for days on end with no food, no drink, no surgical help. Some have travelled the length

of France when they should have been sent to the nearest hospital with the utmost possible speed; others have been left on the battle-field because it was a human impossibility for the number of doctors and stretcher-bearers on the ground to get them away in time; others, again, have been put into cold damp churches, waiting for the help that came too late. And yet there are whole armies of men and women ready to risk anything and everything to help in the bettering of this state of things. Much has been done, much is still being done; but we must allow that red tape (the term is all-enveloping) has hindered the march of events in the right direction, and an immense amount of good material has been wasted through lack of mobile administration and personal adaptability.

My own experience has allowed me to see the chaos which has reigned in all branches of the transport ambulances in and around Paris; but I should prefer to quote a French authority on the subject and give here extracts from articles written by M. Maurice Barrès on the subject in the *Echo de Paris*. M. Barrès has waged continual war against

faulty administration in the *services sanitaires* in a perfectly loyal and unprejudiced way, and by means of bringing information to the Government he has succeeded in getting many mistakes corrected. In an article, written at the beginning of November, he says : ' Men, women, doctors, wounded, a whole host of people I know nothing of, have implored me to voice their complaints. They tell me to go here, to go there, and to look for myself.' M. Barrès went, and the result is he has not ceased to wage war against officials who fail in doing their duty ; and with firm courtesy he has forced them to examine his complaints and correct them. He gives a graphic picture of field ambulances as they are in theory, and as they might be in practice. In theory, a civilian doctor describes the field hospital thus : ' A large room, warmed and aired, everything ready to receive the wounded. Hot water in various vessels, from the steriliser to the foot-bath and the tub. Each patient placed on a bed and carefully washed, put into clean clothing, all of which is first sterilised. Two or three surgeons then examine the extent of the wounds with nurses in attendance, and

operations are done with every modern appliance. The serious cases are kept and the mild cases, after being dressed, are sent away in automobiles waiting for the purpose.' Some one asks where such a room with all its appliances could be found or erected near to the battle-field! And some one else breaks in with: 'That is not my idea at all. Here is the perfect ambulance—it can be put up and taken down in four hours. It follows the troops wherever they go. It takes all the serious cases; and it should be duplicated many times, for a great number will be needed. It should not belong to any particular military division, but should be placed according to geographical position on account of the water supply. Water is the great essential of a surgical ambulance and it must be possible to have it in many states—hot, cold, in steam, sterilised, etc., etc. To provide this we should need ——' But here comes another interruption and this time from a man who has just come back from the front. 'You have been out there, you know what it is like,' he says to M. Barrès, 'the great thing is not to lose a moment in war, the fighting is the

most important thing. Save the wounded! Yes, but first and foremost there is the army. Leave the roads clear for the guns and the stores. Don't try to take with you the *Foire de Neuilly*. On the battle-field of to-day any sort of hospital will be in the way. What we want to do is to get our wounded away as quickly as possible. We cannot hope for perfection, but we can try to be quick. We want a great number of light ambulance cars, such as those used by the American and English hospitals. These will carry our wounded, with hastily dressed wounds, to the nearest hospitals or the nearest station where trains should be ready. The sanitary trains we hear about do not seem to be working; let us then have clean luggage-vans with stretchers, *not straw*, male nurses and a refreshment car where hot water and warm drinks can be provided. Let the trains go straight to the nearest and best equipped hospitals, and do not let them be shunted on to sidelines waiting for something, or nothing, or for a mere administrative freak. Let the journey be as short as possible and let it be comfortable; although, no matter what happens, you

will never hear the soldiers complain. They are magnificent !'

Another article by M. Barrès is devoted to a request that the men should be supplied with little phials of iodine and a dressing, so that they may avoid the risk of germs getting into their wounds before they are found by the stretcher-bearers. Yet another plea is for more doctors on the field and more stretcher-bearers. And an idea is suggested for a side-car stretcher, which one man could work once the wounded soldier was placed on the stretcher. As a case in point, of the way men suffer through bad organisation, M. Barrès quotes that of a man who was wounded on September 25 at Péronne. He remained three days in the ambulance ; then he is sent to Montrouge, in Paris, where he stays half a day ; from there he goes to Niort, where he stays three days ; from there to Marseilles, where he remains three hours ; from there back to Paris, and finally he is sent to the Cochin hospital where, in spite of everything, he is getting better.

According to M. Barrès, and also to personal experience, there seems to have been

everywhere a most alarming waste of good material; and above all, the right men have not been found in the right places. The best surgeons in the world have offered their services to the army, the French hospitals alone have provided a host of capable men of the first and second ranks; yet it is indisputable that through disorganisation—or rather, through the hide-bound stupidity of red tape—many hundreds of men have suffered hours and days and weeks of unnecessary pain; and in some cases they have needlessly lost their limbs and their lives. Individual instances of mastery over administration are not wanting; but the majority of men are forcibly made to observe the rules of inactive bodies of theoretical minds, the result of which is always deplorable.

The same writer has made known many cases where the sisters belonging to religious societies have proved their devotion and capability in hospital work during this war, and it is well known that the average French soldier would rather be nursed by a *religieuse* than any one. He feels comfortable and at his ease when a *bonne sœur* is looking after



ST. JOHN'S AMBULANCE MEN IN PARIS



RED CROSS STEAM-LAUNCH ON THE SEINE



him, and he is not always so when his attendant is '*une dame quelconque.*' With our men it is different. They are used to professional nurses in the ranks of the army sisters; and although they sigh patiently under the kind offices of some of the auxiliary helpers and would be thankful if well-meaning visitors did not think it necessary to talk to them and cross-question them, they nevertheless support the attentions with cheerful philosophy and are often heard to make remarks which add to the gaiety of the ward when they have come through the ordeal of a visit.

The question of the trained or the untrained nurse has been and still is a burning one in Paris. Friction between the professionals and the amateurs was inevitable, and toleration (of other people's opinions) not being a human virtue, there has been a good deal of bitter feeling. The difficulties have not been by any means peculiarly feminine. On the contrary, men workers in the ambulance corps have shown exactly the same human frailties as the women. National prejudice has also been a stumbling-block,

and always and everywhere the soldiers have suffered when these things have happened. Even the greatest war in history has failed, so far, to cleanse administrations of their prejudices and individuals of their intolerance.

A brighter side of the picture is to be found in the wards where the men are daily making their way back to health. No matter whether it be a gorgeous salon in a modern hotel, a sculptured hall in some millionaire's palace, a bare class-room in a college, or a regular ward in a military hospital, the scene is much the same. Rows of beds, and men in different phases of illness and convalescence lying in them. The way in which the bedclothes are arranged explains more or less whether the man has been wounded in the leg or the arm, and there is no need to ask about wounded heads. But although the percentage of men who have lost one limb or more is heavy, the spirit of the wards is extraordinarily cheerful. In the English wards there is generally singing going on to the accompaniment of the gramophone, and the favourite song is still 'Tipperary.' The Tommies never seem to tire of it, and the

*piou-pious* have begun to sing it too. A blue curl of cigarette smoke rises from most beds, newspapers lie on the lockers, magazines and books are less popular; for the men all like to read of the war, nothing else interests them very much. A sister in one of the hospitals was heard to say that the Englishmen are very particular about the clothes they wear, and she declared that a whole lot of very ugly pyjamas she had in stock were useless because none of the men would put them on. The Frenchmen are not so particular, and lie quietly in any sort of a sleeping suit. Beards give them a fiercer look than our shaven men, but they are in reality gentle, courteous, and most remarkably plucky. They dislike visits from strangers more than our men do, and they strongly resent being questioned. Talk *with* them and it is all right, talk *to* them and they are bored, but question them and they are frankly defiant. In the summer, the Paris convalescents were supremely happy in being able to lounge on the balconies overlooking the streets, and the sight of *piou-pious*, Turcos, Zouaves, in all sort of costumes, with

bits of their own uniform to guide you as to what they were, hung over the iron or stone balustrades smoking, laughing, talking, criticising with a pleasurable air of recreation. The khaki uniforms were also busy doing the same thing and what struck some of the Englishmen when they first came to Paris was the number of men to be seen in the streets who looked as if they should be fighting. Now that the winter has come, this out-of-door pleasure, as well as that of being sent out to Versailles to regain health in the gardens of some great hotel or private park, is over, and the wards are the only recreation grounds.

The food in the hospitals is good and plentiful, in some of the private ones it is epicurean. Delicate dishes contrived by chefs, wines from cellars of renown, and always the most beautiful fruits. 'Do stop and have tea with us!' said a man I went to visit. 'We get a splendid tea. It is given by some awfully pretty French lady, who comes herself to pour out for us and talks English perfectly.' The case was common in the sitting-rooms of convalescent officers, and

there was nothing to grumble at in the fresh bread and butter and good tea which was handed round in the big wards.

A story is told that the *cuisine française* failed to please the English soldiers who were recovering in one of the most luxurious hospitals in the city, and they politely but firmly refused to eat some of the daintiest dishes, or the bread and butter with *café au lait* which was given them for breakfast in the morning. 'But you must eat!' said a nurse to one of them. 'Thank you, but I don't care for that sort of breakfast.' 'What sort of breakfast would you like, then?' 'A bit of bacon, for instance,' said the soldier. 'And the soup! You don't seem to like that?' 'No, we like pea soup,' said the soldier a little stiffly. The only thing they really seemed to enjoy was the *ragoût*. It reminded them of Irish stew, and Tommy is very conservative in his tastes. He does not like French veal either, and when he was told that his colonel was eating of the same joint and enjoying it, he merely said: 'I dare say, but I expect *he* has travelled.'

Quite a special place among the Paris

hospitals is due to the little Hertford British Hospital which has been alluded to in a previous chapter. As was then mentioned, it practically grew out of the events of 1870 ; and in 1914 it has held the position of head hospital of the British Red Cross. Sir Richard Wallace, the founder, with whose money it has since been run, would have rejoiced to see the good work it has done during this war, although he would have certainly made that work more important had he been alive. As it stands, this little hospital can only take about forty soldiers, but the successive forties which have been treated in the wards there have had no cause for complaint. It was ready when the other hospitals were not, and it was in its wards and gardens that many of the men recuperated after the great retreat. When the war is over, this little hospital will again be used for the British poor in Paris ; but it is to be hoped that its war services will be remembered and its coffers be replenished, so that its sphere of usefulness may extend and not diminish, as there seemed to be a possibility of their doing before the war broke out.

## PHILANTHROPY

THE State, the Municipality, the Church, and a great number of private individuals, are helping to relieve the distress of Belgian and French refugees, and the poverty of the Paris poor. But, in spite of everything, distress is all too common; and there are very many cases which philanthropy cannot touch.

The State allows a grant to soldiers' wives of 1 fr. 25c. a day, with 50 c. for each child under sixteen. The municipality allows the same sum for those who are thrown out of work, and special relief funds in the various *arrondissements* of the city provide food, coal, clothing, and, whenever possible, work.

Private organisations still further augment the possibilities for women to get help in case of need, and it is certain that a fair proportion of the working women in Paris can now live with a moderate amount of

comfort out of the alms charity offers. But charity is in the difficult position of having to help not merely 'cases,' but 'human cases,' many of whom have all kinds of quips and cranks and peculiarities. To be poor does not necessarily mean to be virtuous, and charity is always being surprised out of her long-suffering attitude. Fortunately there are always the poor to help the poor, and many of them are doing it very beautifully. There is a washerwoman, with very little washing to do just now, who lights her fires and opens her room as a refuge for the neighbours who cannot afford fires of their own. 'Le Dernier Salon' a delightful Frenchman calls it. Many work-girls are offering hospitality to friends who, through unemployment, are homeless and penniless. Very often the hospitality means only a mattress on the floor and a share in the food which 1 fr. 25 c. a day will buy, but it is given ungrudgingly. In a back street, not far away from the 'Dernier Salon,' is a small butcher's shop with an unobtrusive notice that at 12 o'clock every day there is soup to be given away. The butcher makes it with waste meat and bones,

seasoned with fresh vegetables prepared by his wife. A little further down the street lives a picture-framer, whose business has completely faded away since the war ; but he still employs two delicate boys, and he himself spends most of his time hunting out necessitous cases among poor women of the neighbourhood to report to the public authorities. He is helped in his work by a neat capable wife, who seconds him admirably and enlightens him considerably when feminine duplicity puzzles him. 'There are many among the necessitous women who are unthrifty, slatternly, and even worse ; but,' as the picture-framer said with a smile, 'it is not the moment to moralise, so we pretend not to see these things if the women prove to be really poor and in need of help.'

But delicacy of understanding is not a monopoly of the poor ; and in these days, when France is united in the one great emotion of patriotism, many of the barriers reared between classes and creeds are done away with. In the canteens and the *ouvroirs* all classes meet and fraternise ; for they are sharing the same anxiety for the men at the

front, and it is as blessed to receive as it is to give when sympathy really inspires the gift. Some of the *ouvroirs* are in private houses, some in shops, some in studios, with cubist drawings round the walls and cubist canvases on the easels. Groups of women of all ages meet together to sew, to crochet, or to knit, and the organisers of the *ouvroirs* supply the materials and pay the women anything from 1 fr. to 1 fr. 50 c. for an afternoon's work. They may bring their children and they have the distraction of a little gossip. Some are good workwomen, others are not; but all are poor and needy. It is the only necessary qualification to become a member, and it is a very common one.

In some of the *ouvroirs* the women come to fetch the materials, and work on them at home, in which case they are paid so much a garment. The pay, as a rule, is generous; and for the better-class women this arrangement is preferable. In a particular *ouvroir* which was started after the war of 1870 this system is providing for many of the better-class women as well as for its regular staff of workwomen; and to see them come in with

their parcels of work and go out with others is in itself a revelation of many quiet tragedies. A tall aristocratic woman arrives with a bundle of little petticoats, receives her pay, and departs with another bundle. 'She is a lady—we saved her from suicide,' said one of the committee. Another comes in with a pinched smile on her artificially red lips and cheeks that are a little too pink. She was frightened that people should guess she was hungry, so she tried to hide the ravages of poverty with paint. In her pocket she fingered a little leather case nervously. It was her last jewel. She wanted to sell it to pay her gas bill, otherwise there would be no means of cooking what little food she could afford for herself and her daughter. It hurt her to part with this little treasure; for it had been a present from her husband when the child was born. It symbolised prosperity, self-respect, and independence; and the *ouvroir* work was very like the treadmill to her! Yet, what was she to do? She had no claim on the nation; for she was a widow, and she had no son. With variations, her case is one of thousands.

Soup kitchens are very popular institutions and they are very well managed. Milk is provided for mothers and children all over the city by philanthropic organisations, and the many permanent maternal *cliniques* are doing excellent work. So are the Catholic and Protestant 'patronages,' and it looks very much as if the poor of some of the *arrondissements* are even better off than they are in times of peace. In others, the charitable works are less numerous; and in all there is that superior working-class which starves in silence and obscurity because it is too proud to beg, and there is no work for it to do. There is also the whole world of artists, painters, musicians, sculptors; and there is that vast educational world which prunes and polishes so industriously in times of peace, and which is always so badly paid. Nothing effectual is being done to help these educated poor, and every day they slip down a rung of the ladder, which is set in a groundwork of poverty and starvation. The problem is a hard one, and it has not yet been considered on broad lines.

Another stony, philanthropic pathway is

that which leads to the reopening of trade. Almost all business is at a standstill; and in spite of strong efforts to open out various branches, very little has been achieved. French people have no heart for enterprise just now, and to hold steady is costing them dear. Yet there is much to be done. Trades that have been in the hands of Germany could so easily be run if it were only possible to get them started on a sound financial basis. Flower-making and toy-making are essentially French industries; but organisers and capital are needed at once if they are to be regained, and neither are to be found. For years Germany has been supplying France with cheap flowers, having learned from French workers how to make them. For years Germany has been making toys from French models, and America has bought them. If only Business and Philanthropy could follow the old-fashioned example of Righteousness and Peace, thousands of Frenchwomen could now be saved from starvation, and France would recapture her lost industries.

## NOVEMBER IN PARIS

*November 5.*—‘Every day is a *jour des morts* for us in these present times, and life is of no more consequence than a ripe cherry in full season.’ Yet, for all that, the *Four des Morts* of 1914 will be long remembered by the French people, and by the English too; for alongside the graves of the French soldiers lie those of Englishmen who have died for the same cause. In nothing are they so much allied as in their death, for they have all met it with the same courage and simplicity. For two days the Parisians filed out to the cemeteries round the city, loaded with flowers, and very many of them wearing mourning. The cemeteries of Bagneux, Ivry, and Pantin are the ones which have been chosen for the temporary burial-grounds of the soldiers, and it was to these that the mass of people went. Both days (All Saints,

and the 'Day of the Dead') were marked by beautiful weather, a very unusual occurrence; for it is almost a tradition that it rains on these days. 'Un vrai temps des morts' is what the people say when November comes in wet and foggy, and the second-hand-umbrella man considers it as safe to count his pennies beforehand as the artificial-wreath man does to count his. But this year no one bought umbrellas on the *Four des Morts*. You felt sorry for the umbrella man, because he looked so thin and shabby; but you rejoiced in the beautiful weather for the sake of the thousands of sad people who were thronging through the gates all day from early morning until dusk. Even such an unlovely place as a French cemetery looked fair on All Saints Day this year. The trees in the long straight avenues waved golden branches over paths that were carpeted with fallen leaves of red and russet-brown; the sky was blue overhead and the graves of the soldiers were mounds of flowers, out of which rose slender crosses of wood, each bearing the soldier's name, age, and the regiment to which he belonged. There were so many of them,

and they were all so young! Round the square of ground set apart for the soldiers was a flower-bed, freshly planted with white and yellow chrysanthemums; and from the trees round the enclosure were suspended garlands of evergreens attached to the trunks with tricolour ribbons. At the entrance to the military graveyard stood a green monument, hung with the flags of the Allies, at the foot of which flowers were laid in heaps. A service of police was organised to prevent the crowd from any undue crushing; and it was a very slow and orderly procession which passed all day before those newly made graves, each covered with flowers and wreaths and tender inscriptions. In the early morning they were visited by General Gallieni, who paid his tribute of flowers and admiration with the rest of the world. Quite apart from the French and English, lie the Germans, each with his cross and inscription and a smaller meed of flowers. Very silently the crowd passed by the German, graves and one or two women dropped flowers as they passed. 'Ils sont forcés de partir comme chez nous' was the murmured excuse of one,



A MONUMENT TO FALLEN SOLDIERS



as she knelt to place her chrysanthemums on a grave that was nameless.

‘Un vrai pèlerinage’ is what a French woman of the people once called the visit to the cemeteries on the first and second days of November. More than ever was she proved right this year, and more than ever did one realise what a very human thing a pilgrimage is. In the multitude of people which made its way to the graves this year there was not one man or woman who did not honestly suffer at the thought of that mysterious power which cuts us off from those we love. Many faces were worn with grief and swollen with tears at the memory of a recent loss; and many more showed the fear that they might soon be mourning those who were, as far as they knew, still living, fighting, and suffering, in some unknown spot. Yet so strong is the power of actual life that in the midst of all the grief the most incongruous things were done and said, and even magnificent death was not able to give to common life a foretaste of its dignity. People bustled and bargained their way along; and the vendors of the many dreadful souvenirs

of grief with which the populace covers its graves were bent on doing a thriving trade. Cabmen exacted the uttermost farthing of their fares, and the owners of chars-à-bancs profited by the occasion to do a good day's work. The driver of a taxi might be heard to crack a joke with the driver of an antiquated *fiacre*, and the woman conductor of the brake had been careful to adorn her head with imitation-diamond combs for the occasion. Down the sordid avenue leading to the cemetery gates the stall-holders cried their wares with voices as lusty as those we have heard at the Ham Fair, and the vendor of paper whirligigs vied in craftiness with the salesman of bead-and-wire wreaths and wax frames with texts inside. Nougat and *brioche*s were offered for sale alongside tombstones, and patriotic flags and postcards were as much in request as chrysanthemums and pots of evergreens. It was the most amazingly incongruous scene imaginable, for it was an unvarnished picture of life.

Paris is getting busier and more normal every day. The boulevards are crowded every afternoon and the cafés are no longer



A SOLDIER'S GRAVE



GERMAN GRAVES



deserted. A new motor-bus ran a trial trip one day and aroused false hopes ; but no more has been seen of it, and we use the old four-horse char-à-banc which plies its way at irregular intervals between the Bastille and the Madeleine. The tea-shops, as well as the cinemas, are opening one by one, Residents are coming back to their winter quarters, and schools and colleges are now more or less in working order. The big shops are much busier than they were, and there is more animation in the public ways generally. Only at night is Paris still a very quiet and sober city, for the cafés continue to close at eight o'clock and the restaurants at 9.30. The streets are darkened, and the searchlights maintain their activity. During the early days of the month we had the most wonderful moonlight nights, which made of Paris a city of beautiful mysteries ; and to stand on the Pont Neuf and look down the river to the towers of Notre-Dame, past the Conciergerie, the Palais de Justice, and the Sainte Chapelle, was like looking at a Whistler nocturne. The moonlight turned the mists to silver, and the rare lights round the landing-stages

glimmered like fallen stars in the river. The towers and spires and turrets rose like fairy structures to the skies, and the unusual silence over everything accentuated the unreal beauty of the whole.

There is very little life on the boulevards after ten o'clock, and the by-streets are even more deserted. Policemen in pairs patrol the city, but their duty has never been lighter; and so accustomed to orderliness have they become that a butcher-boy driving his horse at a mad gallop through the silent streets towards the *Halles* causes them to hide in the shadow of a house to avoid arresting him.

The news from the front continues to be good. Every day we read that the Allies are progressing at a snail's pace but surely; and every day we learn how terrible has been, and still is, the slaughter. From England we have had news of an attempt of the German Navy to bombard Yarmouth and that shells have actually fallen on the beach. French people no more believe in the invasion of England than they believe in Socialism being of any account in English politics.

They look upon us as a people essentially conservative; and our Navy is, to them, invincible. English people in France do not feel quite so happy about things. We are inclined to think that England may have a few lessons to learn; and a great many Englishmen rather viciously hope that a Zeppelin will drop bombs on London to make the nation realise what it is to be in actual danger of attack.

No more Taubes have managed to throw bombs on Paris since their generous distribution in October; but it is not from the lack of trying. Every day, almost, they fly in our direction—only to be driven back by the French airmen who now police the air with great effect. The airmen are, it is said, very much annoyed that they have been recalled from the fighting line to fulfil this dull and inglorious task; but it has to be done, so they make the best of it. We saw the ascent and descent of a biplane at Issy-les-Moulineaux the other day, and heard, on our return, that a machine from the same district had met with an accident after we left which caused the death of two first-class

airmen. Both had been out at the front doing dangerous work for weeks, and they came back without a scratch only to meet death on a peaceful autumn day in the midst of their own people. There have been many cases like that in the flying corps, as well as in the army; and it is being continually brought home to those who must stand aside and watch the war from the very back of the theatre, how glorious some of those inglorious deaths have been.

In the same way we have realised how worthy is the task of the soldier who belongs to the second and third fighting line, the man who guards the bridges, the railway lines, the commissariat store-houses, and the forts that are not very likely to be called upon for defence. Instead of the excitement and danger of the fighting line, they are asked to endure the appalling monotony of uninteresting manual labour, and not enough of that in many cases to give them the consolation of an immense fatigue such as sometimes acts as a drug. They are herded together, irrespective of class, and their lives are stripped of most of the things which

civilisation has taught them to value. We went out to see a man we know who is in the fort artillery and who is stationed in the neighbourhood of Paris. This particular fort is the smallest of a nest of forts and its full complement of men is five hundred, all of whom are supposed to lodge in the fort and to feed in the canteen. Each room is arranged to sleep fifty-seven men, and the planks upon which every man stretches his sleeping-sack lie very close together. The ventilation, as may be supposed, is not of the best, and uneasy lie the heads which in the day-time carry those smart little artillery fatigue caps so jauntily. The days are wearisome and the nights are attended by many nightmares! There are not a few vacant planks among the fifty-seven; for as many as can and dare, arrange to sleep outside in rooms they hire for themselves. They escape to their lodgings by various methods and are on duty in the morning at the appointed hour. In some forts no leave is given to men living near Paris, and those who visit the city run the risk of earning fifteen days of prison. Needless to say, the

risk is run fairly often ; for to be near Paris and not visit it would be a sacrifice not one Parisian in a thousand would be capable of making. The surrounding country is the greatest consolation for the deadly monotony of their existence, for it is beautiful, fertile, and health-giving. In summer, the gardens were loaded with fruits and vegetables which the soldiers either bought, begged, or stole ; and now that the autumn has arrived, they benefit by the moonlight nights to poach rabbits and wild duck. Food is the one absorbing topic after the war, and some of the men are excellent cooks. Their domestic duties are weightier than their military ones, and the lack of all other occupation is felt very keenly. Those who know how to seize their opportunities get special work which lifts them out of the worst of the monotony and accords them some extra liberty. Our friend, for instance, is deputy postmaster, and his duties allow him to live outside the fort in more or less comfortable lodgings shared with a barrister friend who has been named *infirmier* to the hospital by applying for it in the nick of time. They do their

own cooking, spend their evenings in playing cards and reading old newspapers or re-reading old books, to an eternal accompaniment of cigarette smoking. But they are among the lucky exceptional cases, and we heard of many very unhappy fathers of families who were obliged to put up with the sleeping-sack, the crowded room, the canteen, and a very mixed society; and they are men who, in times of peace, are used to comfortable homes and a society which, if not exactly intellectual, is at least very different from that of the canteen at the fort. The admirable thing about it is, that with all its drawbacks, the men are supporting this life patiently and philosophically. There is practically no drunkenness, no insubordination, and comparatively little grumbling. They make no pretence at being martial in spirit and they will be very glad to get back to their business, their profession, or whatever may be their civil lot in life; but in the meantime they are perfectly willing to give their time to the country, and they are immensely proud of General Joffre.

Another friend of ours is among the most

humble of France's little *piou-pious*; and he, too, is holding steady far behind the fighting line. He has been guarding railways and stores ever since the war began and he is bored to death, but quite resigned. 'If only they would send me two hundred kilometres from Paris I should not care, but to be so near and not to be able to go inside the gates is sometimes almost more than I can bear.' That is the true little Parisian of the boulevards. The world, for him, is Paris. Outside the gates is the desert. To make an excursion into the wilds of Versailles and St. Germain is all very well, but to stay there for months on end is purgatory. He showed us his quarters, and we had to confess that they were not luxurious. A stable, which stabled six horses in peace time, was converted into a sleeping-room for twenty-nine men. Wooden frames, with wire netting stretched across them, lay side by side on the ground; and on these, softened by a straw mattress and rolled in a rug, they dreamed away the nights and a good many of the afternoons when they were not on duty. Round the stalls they had hung their various



AN ENGLISH SOLDIER AND HIS SMALL PLAYMATE



TOMMY'S KITCHEN



possessions in perfect neatness and order, their washing hung outside and their writing-desk was a slanting bit of wood, propped up on two staves, with a very small stump of a tree, as a seat, in front of it. The kitchen consisted of a fire and a stove-pipe; and chestnuts, picked up in the woods, were roasting over it. All round them were the woods dressed in autumn glory. The weather was perfect, fine, warm, yet with a touch of crispness in the air, and the great Palace of Versailles cast its shadow over their cantonment. Of all the beauty and all the grandeur our *piou-piou* would acknowledge nothing. He was too bored, and he was homesick for his beloved Paris which lay just over there, but beyond his reach. 'The only permission we can get is to go to church, and then we are regarded with favour. So we ask all the time, and sometimes we go and sometimes we don't.' I pointed to his sabre: 'C'est dangereux?' 'Mais pas du tout!' And he produced an ancient weapon which he said dated from 1868. 'It is very useful to peel potatoes!' he said with a gay little laugh. Apparently they were waiting for new arms,

as theirs had been taken away for immediate use and in the meantime they were fitted out with rifles and sabres of ancient pattern.

It is inspiring to get proof from all quarters of how the country is appreciating the splendid qualities of General Joffre. He is the hero of the nation, not only as a soldier and a great general, but as a man. The whole of France lauds his generalship and pays tribute to his solid qualities. A thorough-paced *bourgeois de Paris* said to us this week: 'I have never interested myself in politics before, but since the war I have followed things closely. It appears that the Government has given us nothing, while the army has given us Joffre.' But for General Joffre, they all agree, Paris would not have been defended, and France might have been humiliated. A little greengrocer of great merit and much dignity found out with delight that a friend of mine was English and not American, and concluded that therefore she must be more interested in the war, 'because you have Kitchener and we have Joffre.' Every day he holds long conversations with her and discusses the situation

with the keen intelligence of a certain type of Frenchman, no matter what his class. 'We owe much to the English and we owe *une bonne chandelle au roi Albert*,' said another man, 'but as to the Government—well, we shall see!'

*November 12.*—The struggle is still going on round Ypres. All the strength of Germany in the north of France and Belgium is being massed at that point in the hope of breaking our line and thus making a way to Dunkirk and Calais. We are repeatedly assured that the effort will be in vain, and every day we read of the almost superhuman valour and resistance of the Allies. They attack and defend with the same courage and gaiety as they did in the early days, but they are paying an appalling price, and we at home do not realise a hundredth part of the horrors they are experiencing every hour. If we did it is doubtful if we could hold steady as we do, much less could we live the calm everyday existence which is our lot. We read terrible stories and we hear worse, but we do not look on any of these things with our own eyes. The nurses in the hospitals see

the men come in mangled, ill, dying; and some of them will carry the memory of such things with them for a long while, but in the business of helping to cure those who suffer, or of administering to them the last rites of earthly comfort, they have no time to allow such impressions to become actively harmful to their work. I called to see a friend of mine this week who had been spending a month in a fortified town very near to the fighting line. She had lived in the continual sound of cannon, she had stood for two hours on end to watch the wounded come in, a never-ceasing procession which went on day after day. She had watched the wives and mothers and daughters of the soldiers trying to succour and save their menkind; and, to put it briefly, she lived, for a month, in 'the valley of the shadow of death.'

A cheerful event of the month was the celebration of King Albert of Belgium's name day. A service was held in Notre-Dame and half Paris went to hear Monseigneur Amette preach. The Duc and Duchesse de Vendôme were in the congregation, and the

Duchess, as King Albert's sister, showed that she was deeply moved at the many proofs of his popularity in France. The Hôtel de Ville was decorated for the occasion and distributions of comforts for the refugees marked the event. But better than all the public exhibitions of admiration and gratitude to the King of the Belgian people were the many private proofs of appreciation of the heroic rôle which has been played by their King. All sorts of people sent postcards direct to His Majesty and some of them expressed the sender's wishes in the most original terms. One woman told him frankly that she hoped that very soon he would come and be *notre roi*; and when some one protested that her wishes were scarcely patriotic, she merely shrugged her shoulders and retorted that she liked kings and she above all liked brave kings. Another French subject, also feminine, suggested that she would much have liked to see him king, but that as France had General Joffre there could be no question of it. It is obvious that all France recognises the splendid resistance which the Belgian nation made against Germany and ardently

sympathises with its losses, but it is King Albert and Queen Elizabeth who have captured that fugitive thing called French sympathy.

. . . . .

Another week has gone by and the struggle is still going on in Flanders and Northern France while our hopes still play at see-saw between the western and the eastern battle-fields. In Paris, there is very little sign of relaxation from anxiety. The city is necessarily fuller than it was in the summer and early autumn, but beyond the everyday duties no one does anything, and life is extremely monotonous. The Government is still at Bordeaux, in spite of several false alarms about its return. We are quite content with military government and it is the fashion to profess an immense distrust in all things governmental. It is true that M. Caillaux has been sent to South America on a vague commercial mission and Madame Caillaux has gone with him. The papers were eloquent on the subject chiefly by the blank spaces they showed in their columns, the result of the censor's eliminating finger,

and the public is unanimous in its relief that this stormy politician has been banished temporarily from France. Many stories are told of both M. and Mme. Caillaux and the parts they have played, or have tried to play since the beginning of the war. One tells that Mme. Caillaux was running an ambulance but could get no wounded; another that she was wandering from place to place in search of some philanthropic work which she could not find; and it is reported that M. Caillaux was cavalierly treated by English officers and received anything but a welcome from the military authorities of his own country. General Gallieni is said to have sent him back to his post with more dispatch than consideration when he sought an interview with him in Paris; and even his friends, of whom it is known there are still a goodly number in France, are beginning to be friendly in a discreet and silent fashion. For the moment, at any rate, the Caillaux star is dim on the political horizon and France is breathing more freely in consequence.

But politics, like pleasures of the ultra-Parisian kind, are merely superficial elements

in the French national character ; and for the moment France has opened her innermost doors and we are seeing her as she is at heart. That is to say, we are seeing her steadily serious and essentially religious. Carlyle said that Frenchmen possessed 'thought without reverence,' but this war has proved Carlyle to be wrong in more instances than one. The whole attitude of France to-day is unquestionably reverent, not in any pharisaical fashion, but in a sincere, courageous manner which it is splendid to see. We have heard so much of the anti-clerical France, the free-thinking France, and the France that mocks at all things. But anyone who knows France knows also that all these things are not France at all. France is irrevocably and innately Catholic, and the war has proved her to be so. She will probably be narrowly so for a time, because the reaction after the struggle between Church and State is sure to be strong and the priests have, generally speaking, behaved so splendidly throughout the whole war that their influence over the people is likely to be great. Whether as soldiers or clerics, they have done their duty

magnificently, and in many cases their attitude has compared well with that of civil officials. Monseigneur Amette has declared within the last few days that the majority of the soldiers fighting show strong religious proclivities and during the mobilisation it was common for men to make their confession before leaving for the front. In all the hospitals, in all the military stations, the same spirit is still to be found. It is also noticeable in the world of civilians in a hundred different ways : by the articles they like to read in the daily papers, by the avoidance of all irreverent allusions in the illustrated comic papers, by an access of reverence towards the dead, and above all by the habit of going to church. Never have the churches been fuller than they are in these days, and never have the men and women who fill them gone with such single purpose to pray. Even in daily intercourse this spirit of reverence permeates, and the spirit of mockery is no longer heard. To generalise on any subject is dangerous, but it is safe to say that the entire French nation to-day is living at its best. Where the discords come in,

the harmonies are all the more to be prized in comparison, and the harmonies to-day have almost silenced the discords.

A notable effect of the war is its effect upon the modern woman. With one accord the Frenchwomen, even the ultra-feminists, seem to have united in one great effort for the good of the country. In one way or another every Frenchwoman is doing something for France. They have all sent their menkind to fight; they are all paying in money, work, or self-denial; a great number of them are already mourning the loss of those dearest to them in the world, and from highest to lowest they are carrying on their difficult tasks with courage, dignity, and determination. Their great consolation is their religion and the instinctive way in which each woman turned to that source for comfort was in itself a proof that, whatever else in her nature might be factitious, this at least was real. Even among the most free-thinking social sets the women have turned to the Church for consolation. Many of them seek for a modified expression of the faith they were born to; but all acknowledge the necessity for religion of some sort; and many of them

think that the Roman Catholic religion is the one most fitted to the Latin temperament. A natural companion to this sentiment is the one which acknowledges the importance of family ties; and I have heard women who have broken every tie that family can create declare during these last three months, that *la famille*, in the old-fashioned sense of the word, is the great force and the only strength upon which France can rely, excepting, and putting first always, her religious convictions. They sum up, with the lucidity in which they excel, all the failures which liberty of thought, as expressed by recent Governments, has brought about; and although they have been in the most forward and most feminist of movements, they allow that, to-day, they are back at the place from which they started. It is certain, however, that their excursions into foreign, forbidden, realms of thought have widened and purified their judgments on humanity; and even if, for a time, they renounce their own cause and take up that of the nation, coming generations must benefit by their recent struggles. Nothing so vital as the feminist movement can possibly die,

although its fruits may be quite different from those which the planters premeditated.

Another thing which proves the sober temper of the Parisians is the half-hearted way in which they are welcoming the reopening of the theatres. Permission has been granted to the theatres to reopen, under a long list of regulations and restrictions. The chief reason for reopening them is the necessity to employ the actors, actresses, musicians, and all the many underlings who go to make up the theatrical world. But even under these conditions and with the incentive of charity performances for the soldiers and the Belgian refugees to give them an air of propriety, the public is looking coldly on the project. The Comédie Française is giving a Sunday *matinée*, and the Opéra Comique opens on the same day. Needless to say the censor keeps an eye on all programmes and the music-halls, which are also to open soon, will be under the strictest supervision. It is a perfectly honest mental attitude which prevents the French people from taking up their old habits and pleasures, and it proves that the heart of France is in the trenches. Everywhere it is

the same story: 'I am almost ashamed to go to bed when I remember that the men *là bas* are lying cold and wet in the trenches, or are fighting in the open, or maybe are lying wounded on the battle-field.' Many people go so far as to impose unpleasant tasks on themselves in their desire to share in some way the miseries of the soldiers at the front. The spirit of self-denial is strong upon them and they are happiest when they can deny themselves little comforts, even necessaries, and they do it all with a natural simplicity which is altogether lovable. Not a day goes by but some story of a soldier's bravery, or some instance of a woman's courage, comes my way to prove to me how right was the man who broke off in the middle of a lamentation on the awfulness of the war to say: 'Mais, mon Dieu, qu'elle est belle, cette guerre!'

Not the least admirable thing about the war is its anonymity. With the exception of General Joffre and one or two very popular generals on his staff, no names are mentioned, unless in the case of some decoration being given. Yet we know from private letters that deeds of splendid heroism are being

done every moment and men die as they do them, or they live never to tell the tale. From the highest of the officers to the most obscure of the *piou-pious*, the Frenchmen are doing their duty in such a way that it is impossible to think of them without a thrill. We have it brought home to us a hundred times in a week, as we go about our life here, how many men the country has called upon to fight; and in every letter that comes back from the front we learn that, no matter how hard the task, they are all doing it to their utmost. Everywhere you go now the gaps are visible. There is no trade, no administration, but is crippled for the want of men. Greybeards, bald heads, and beardless chins alone are to be seen in Paris nowadays, and whichever way we turn the scarcity of masculine labour is felt. To get a water- or gas-pipe mended is very difficult, locksmiths are at a premium, coal-heavers are almost as rare as autumn leaves and there are very few bakers and butchers, so that we get nothing but *pain de ménage* and very little freshly killed meat. Bootmakers are also rare, and it takes a full month to get a pair of shoes

made. As to gardeners, carpenters, glaziers, chimney-sweeps and all those useful, unobtrusive people who provide us with so many comforts in times of peace, they are not to be found without much searching; and even when found, they are too busy to do what is needed. All these inconveniences are the fruits of enforced military service, yet no one grumbles, no one even remarks on such things; *on s'y habitue*, that is all. But with such a crippled everyday existence it is not surprising that life in Paris does not open out and become normal.

The death of Field-Marshal Lord Roberts, during his visit to the Indian troops in France, was one of those impressive happenings which leave the world divided between sorrow and an extraordinary sense of the fitness of things. It would be superfluous for me to speak of England's grief at the loss of her great soldier, and the tribute of admiration that France has paid to him is well known; but a little incident which happened when the coffin was being carried away from General French's headquarters seems to have escaped notice. An English airman

hovered for a moment over the procession, swept down as a salute in front of the bier, then rose again into the air and flew away to the front. It was an unexpected, graceful gesture, and the French people who saw it were much impressed.

Our Royal Family has quietly added to the prestige of our army in France this month; first, by the arrival of the Prince of Wales to join the staff of Sir John French, and finally by a visit of the King to the British Expeditionary Force. Not for 170 years has an English sovereign been with his troops in action, and never before has the King of England come to France as a friendly monarch in war. The French people are quietly but profoundly appreciative of King George's action, but there is no undue parade about it. The New France is essentially self-restrained, and neither King nor hero can move her to loud expressions of joy until the struggle for liberty and peace is finished and the Allies can claim a full and honourable victory.

## THE SKIRTS OF THE DEPARTING YEAR

THE return of the President of the Republic and his ministers from Bordeaux to Paris is an event which, however quietly performed, has necessarily closed a phase in the war for the Parisians. The French Government went rapidly, secretly ; and it has come back quietly, almost surreptitiously. A modest paragraph in the morning paper announces its return and then we see the stately ministerial doors open and the coming and going of other days begin all over again. The public limits its comments to a shrug of indifference on the subject ; for in spite of their admirable restraint under the appalling test of such a war as the present one, the French people, or perhaps I should say the Parisians, have kept their privilege to be supremely unreasonable on certain subjects, and the Government is one.

They treat it with an off-hand loftiness which makes you think of a schoolboy on the subject of woman : and even as the schoolboy changes his attitude to women when the right time comes, so will the French people change towards the Government when its offices are wanted. But in the meantime, it must be confessed that to do your duty as a civilian, no matter how nobly, is of small account in the eyes of the public. Politics are not in favour, although the famous ' Livre Jaune ' is being very much read and discussed, and some excellent articles have been written on the subject. Perhaps one of the most interesting, because one of the most broadly psychological, is the one written by M. Paul Bourget. Rapidly, and with the precision of the human philosopher rather than with the cut-and-dried dogmatism of the diplomat, M. Bourget throws light on the undercurrents of events by bringing into strong relief the characters of the men who were acting for France in comparison with those who represented Germany. He also shows the difference between the spirit which moves the military and political parties in France, and he

describes his own impressions from the reading of the Yellow Book as twofold : pride on the one side, and sorrow on the other. Pride in the obvious moral superiority of France over Germany, and sorrow in the pettiness of the political ambitions which caused the warnings of M. Jules Cambon to be ignored. He points out the superiority of the Latin over the Teuton in the interview between M. Berthelot and Baron von Schöen five days before war was declared, he indicates particularly the extraordinarily fine judgment of M. Jules Cambon on the meeting between King Albert and the Emperor William in 1913, and he likens the representatives of France during these diplomatic manœuvres to Colbert, the minister of Louis XIV. 'Ce sont, comme le ministre de Louis XIV, des produits excellents de notre classe moyenne avec des qualités de conscience professionnelle, d'application et de lucidité. Ils ont de l'énergie, mais réglée, de l'ardeur, mais perspicace, de l'intelligence, mais sans idéologie . . . je le répète, soyons fiers que la France a été représentée de la sorte.' Following on this he pays high homage to the army and

the way in which the warnings from M. Jules Cambon about Germany's attitude were received in military circles. The midnight oil was burned in many an officer's quarters, maps were studied, German military documents and German current literature relating to military affairs were profoundly studied, hard work and self-denial were the order of the day; for the French officer of 1914 is essentially a worker, and he might well, says M. Bourget, take for his *breviaire* the 'Commentaires' of Montluc: 'I am learning to dispense with wine, gambling and greediness, knowing well that all captains who are of that complexion never become great men.' Or again: 'You should be with your men as much as possible, learn to know each one individually and by name.' And yet again: 'There is a fourth vice; if you cannot altogether avoid it, at least take it soberly: it is the love of women.' Of such men, M. Bourget feels that France may well be proud: and then he draws a picture of the other side of the position.

When warnings from Berlin were being sent to France by her Ambassador of such

gravity that there was no gainsaying them, what was the French Government doing? It was stirring up national discord in every direction; it was even preaching pacifism though it knew that Germany was menacing the country at the very time, it was planning new taxation, it was parading the importance of presidential changes, and it was seething with party corruption as if France and the very existence of the French race were not hanging in the balance. It is this picture which gives M. Bourget an impression of sadness. Fortunately the country and the race proved themselves stronger than the politicians and 'la France s'est ressaisie.'

The suggestions held in these brief criticisms, to anyone who knows France and the French people are manifold. They open vistas of remembrance and they give meaning and moment to many matters which, before, seemed of little importance. We suddenly see as a picture of what has, hitherto, been a puzzle. We see the French people as a clear, sparkling crystal, capable of retaining its characteristics in spite of a hundred superfluities. We see a people extraordinarily

capable of self-sacrifice, profoundly conservative, deeply religious in the doctrinal sense and above all of the most amazing vitality. The picture of the hard-working French officer M. Bourget draws so broadly brings to our minds many pictures of French military *ménages*, and we realise how true the picture is. A French general gets £800 a year and lives as simply as a hard-working shopkeeper. His wife, who shares his title, and is addressed as *La Générale*, supervises her husband's dinner as carefully as she did when he was a lieutenant. She observes a strict military etiquette without any ostentation, and waives none of the respect due to her from the wives of her husband's inferior officers; but her household and *train de vie* are of the most modest, even as her husband is of the most hard-working. Both mentally and physically the French officer works hard. His training at St. Cyr and at the Polytechnique is a strenuous one, and if he is at all ambitious he must literally slave when he is once in the army. It is not enough to be a good officer, liked by the men and of good social standing. A man must know German and English

military history as well as his own; he must, in fact, be theoretically and practically perfect. I know a man who was a colonel before the war and is now a general; he is one of the hardest workers I have ever known and his knowledge is encyclopædic. He has an extremely pretty wife who also has a passion for work and a very quick wit. The last time I called on her, she and her husband were installed in a suite of fine old rooms in the *École de Guerre*, which she had furnished with heavy old provincial furniture, and the scene of her reception-day might have stood for a passage by Flaubert or a chapter by Balzac.

In true bourgeois fashion *La Colonelle* sat in state on a sofa with her visitors arranged in a half-circle before her. She flung remarks here, there, and everywhere, much as she might have flung a ping-pong ball, and with something of the same hum and rattle, for she is both witty and *piquante*. An old general with many recollections, and an acute sense of present opportunities, helped her to keep the conversation lively; but beyond these two I thought I had never seen such serious people and such gay uniforms together. The

same picture can be found in half the drawing-rooms of military France; for we must remember that the French army is a bourgeois army—bourgeois in the best sense of the word. Where the officers are men of aristocratic family, their birth and surroundings dominate their military situation, unless, as occasionally happens, they come of a long line of military aristocrats; and then they generally live in memoirs and regrets, allied to resignation and a patriotic sense of duty.

The vision called up by M Bourget's second impression is governmental, political, and a very net-work of ambitious intrigue; to all of which the army has been forced to form an unwilling fringe. But even here, the solid, steady, bourgeois element has bright moments when the country is in question. Gossip, scandal, political abuses generally, make the governmental circle a dangerous, difficult social pitfall; and the painting of its demons is so black by those whose opinions differ that it inclines the onlooker who is not personally interested to wonder sometimes whether those very demons are not

less black than they are painted. At least, it may be hoped that they have a vulnerable spot of virtue, for some of them have done extraordinarily well since the beginning of the war. But to hear the comments of a thoroughly good reactionary on modern politics and politicians is a lively lesson in Christian charity. It is, moreover, suggestive that politics in the past, under other dynasties, were *sans peur et sans reproche*. Unfortunately for the argument, history tells a different tale, and we must conclude that we are merely repeating it.

But even the Government, with all its appurtenances, and the foreign Embassies with all their ceremony and state, cannot give to Paris its accustomed bustle. The *couloirs* of the *Chambre des Deputés* may bristle with rumours, the newspaper writers may indulge in epigrammatic witticisms, ministerial dinner-tables may groan with weighty speeches, and the clubs may give birth to an infinity of *mots*; but nothing can revive the sparkle of Paris life in the present circumstances. For the moment its wine-like qualities have disappeared, even as

the brightness of many women's eyes is shadowed.

The *barragues* are erected on the boulevards, toys are being sold as usual, crowds of people stroll along the broad pavements to look and to buy and to finger, but there is no raffling at the booths, and there is not much laughter. In the big shops, exhibitions of toys are being held, but in a very mild way. There is no palace made of cardboard with fairy grottoes and life-size dolls, there is no 'set piece' to music, to make the babies laugh, there is not even a giant Christmas tree; but there are endless little toy soldiers in the uniforms of the Allies, and there are sentry-boxes, guns, war-ships, aeroplanes, and all the panoply of war in miniature. At certain hours of the day these big shops look crowded; but the amount of business done is really very small, and the spirit of Christmas mirth is absent. There is even a good deal of tragic pathos to be seen. A soldier home on leave brings his wife and children to choose their New Year's gifts before going back to the front. A woman in deep mourning brings her small son to choose

a miniature uniform, and she scarcely flinches when he asks for the one like that his father used to wear. A middle-aged man is seen buying a whistle for his son who is to go to the front with the 1914 class the next week. Grimly he tests his purchase, and his voice is gruff and ungracious when he says: 'Blow that if you get hit.' Everywhere there are little upsetting scenes of the same kind, and it is difficult to think, for a moment, that the city is normal, in spite of its brave attempts to look as if it were. In the streets, holly and mistletoe are being hawked, and southern flowers, roses and carnations, lie in heaps on the barrows in the streets. Round the provision-shops little forests of fir trees prove that Christmas trees are still to be a fashion; and the bonbons, Christmas puddings (such strange productions when they are made in the French manner), and all the rest of the season's paraphernalia are spread out to give everybody courage to make merry. Nevertheless, the spirit of mirth does not get beyond a limping measure, and the Christmas of 1914 will be a sober one in Paris.

Last year, at this time, every one was

talking of *réveillon* suppers, the tango and other revelries of the most Parisian and expensive kind. This year there will be no *réveillon* and the tango is not even whispered. There will be midnight mass. The churches will be crowded and the restaurants empty. Instead of laughter there will be tears, and yet one is tempted to think that the tragedy of tears is less painful than that of false laughter, for there was a good deal of merriment that did not ring true before the war.

*December 22.*—The Chamber met to-day for the first time since August 4. Those deputies who are doing military service had special leave for the occasion, but they were ordered not to come in uniform. Some took advantage of the permission, others did not, and three of the number have been killed in action. The unity of feeling which marked the *séance* of August 4 again prevailed in the House to-day; and in the speech of M. Paul Deschanel, the President of the Chamber, and in that of M. Viviani, the Prime Minister, there was one predominating sentiment—confidence in the army and the determination

of the Government in the name of the country to respect the treaty signed by the Allies to fight until victory was indisputable and peace a sure and lasting result of the sacrifices of the war. In the Senate, M. Aristide Briand made the same declaration, and M. Viviani's speech was an admirably restrained expression of clear and patriotic devotion. The speech of M. Paul Deschanel was particularly enthusiastic and patriotic in the broad sense. His admiration for the allied armies was generous and dignified, and his allusions to the part played by England and her colonies were applauded as enthusiastically as was his recognition of the valour of Belgium's resistance. Serbia's fine fight for her rights was also warmly recognised, and Russia's steady attack was pointed to with force. In speaking of France and her soldiers M. Deschanel was very impressive. He made all who heard him realise in a few sentences the intense love of country which is possessing every Frenchman worth the name at this moment. He put into his words the very essence of all that is patriotically French, and although fine phrases

are of small account in these days of action, the house was moved to great enthusiasm before such sincerity and eloquence.

The daily *communiqués* are monotonous but cheerful, and to hear people talk of the soldiers' Christmas you would think that hostilities were in abeyance on that account. About four o'clock every afternoon people ask, 'What is the *communiqué*?' And the answer is invariably, 'Oh, good, as usual. We have taken a trench, and retaken a house. We have made progress in the Argonne and have a marked advantage in Alsace.' It is useless to study the map, because the armies in Flanders only move inch by inch. It is difficult to realise what is being done in Poland, and the geographical names are so difficult to pronounce that it is impossible to talk about them. So we greedily devour all the letters which come from the trenches, all the stories told by the men who come back on leave, as well as all rumours and opinions that are spread from mysterious sources and which generally vanish before bald facts. But eager as every one is, there is none of the feverish anxiety of the earlier days; and

though the length of the war is trying people to the utmost, hope and belief in consequent victory, of the most complete kind, buoy up the spirits and bring some consolation for the pain that is inevitable.

One day this week I saw some youths of the 1915 class who were going up for training and I stood among a crowd of people who were watching them as they passed—singing, laughing, shouting, almost as they do in ordinary times. It was the only public manifestation I have seen for many weeks, and the effect on the people was curious. Men, women, and girls stood quite still and looked sadly, almost disapprovingly, at the excited group of boys. Some suffered obviously to see another levy of the country's youth on its way to the war; and among the boys themselves there were thoughtful faces which seemed to tell a tale of pain and perhaps of reluctance. But, generally speaking, they all looked fit and ready for the hard discipline which awaits them.

French interest is turned a good deal in the direction of England just now. Among other things, the naval tactics are being much

discussed. After the success of the Falkland Islands came the astounding bombardment of the Yorkshire coast and the escape of the three German cruisers which were answerable for it. The invincibility of the English Navy is still a French tradition as well as an English one, but the eyes of the country are turned enquiringly across the Channel at the present moment. Sympathy with the civil population in the bombarded towns, and recognition of their *sang-froid*, were blended with a surprised attitude of curiosity and an inability to believe that England had really been touched. But quite blotting out this event is the interest which is being turned on Egypt. The attitude of France throughout the recent proceedings has been admirable. With perfect loyalty and great dignity the nation has recognised the inevitable course things have taken. It has realised the success of British rule in Egypt and the wisdom of M. Delcassé's policy in assuring Morocco to France. Individually there may be regrets and some recrimination, but collectively there is a courteous recognition of the situation which is both tactful and admirable. Another point

of English diplomacy which has interested French people very much is the appointment of an official representative of England to the Vatican. That England, a Protestant country, should see the necessity of such an appointment and that France, essentially Catholic, in spite of her anti-clerical party, should not be represented at all, is a very much disputed point. It is even maintained, by men who are not Catholics, that this lack may be of serious moment in the near future.

The relations between England and France are fraught with so many dangers that it will need all the fine characteristics of both races to ensure their maintaining a friendship which is as valuable to the one as to the other. Politically, it is given to all who run to read, and recent events have shown what wonders time can work. But the barriers of our national characteristics are difficult things to adjust comfortably. The great spirits of all nationalities, as we all know, meet on certain points; but it is rather the lesser spirits which make up the nation's daily life, and act as the arbiters of our national fate. Rodin may give a splendid gift to

England in recognition of the way the English soldier is fighting, and he has said that he has always found in the English nation *droiture, caractère et audessus de tout la justice*. England's scholars may prove in a hundred ways that they recognise the brilliance of French intellect. Snobbism in art and literature may produce periods of particular worship for one school or one man; but the great majority, the nations, with all their sympathies and all their limitations born, not of one man's philosophy, nor of one school of painting or literature, but of centuries of tradition and education. These are the rocks upon which we flounder. To realise how limited is our knowledge of each other, we have only to read the surprise of René Bazin when he discovers that Englishmen are capable of delicate sentiment and *finesse* as well as of courage and straightforwardness, or the light criticism of Georges Ohnet who describes the Englishman as an exceptionally well-groomed sportsman, with natural tendencies towards all that is Teuton and a difficult comprehension of the Latin. In England we meet with the same lack of supple understanding

where French people are concerned. If you are French, you are volatile. Always there is a little reserve behind our admiration, however sincere our admiration may be. The war will certainly wipe out many misunderstandings between Frenchmen and Englishmen, but it will strengthen some of the barriers.

*Christmas Day.*—It was an ideal Christmas morning. A light sprinkling of hoar-frost caused every roof and tree to sparkle in the sunshine. A pale-blue sky beamed gently overhead, and the river wound as a silver thread through the heart of the city. It was kind of Nature to look so beautiful on this particular Christmas Day; for even the saddest faces showed a gleam of pleasure in the glory of the morning and it was an omen of hope to those who remembered that Christmas has another meaning quite apart from plum-pudding and noisy mirth.

In the hospitals and refugee camps, Christmas was kept with determined cheerfulness. Giant trees, presents, entertainments, and any amount of good things to eat, were well to the fore. All the busy people in khaki who hang about the Red Cross institutions carried

out the orders of the day with a firmness that was truly military. So impressive were they in some cases, that it needed the remembrance of General Joffre to dissipate their importance into nothingness. Once having passed the carefully guarded portals of the doorways and being free of the stern suspicion of overgrown boy scouts and multitudinous wearers of unmilitary khaki, it was pleasant to see the soldiers keeping up the old customs. At the Hertford British Hospital the atmosphere was particularly English. The wards were decorated with holly, mistletoe, and cotton-wool to 'look like snow.' The tree stood in the middle of the chief ward and the entertainment began with carols. The soldiers were all very much at home and they, not the visitors, dominated the proceedings. They sang the songs they wanted to sing, proposed their own toasts, cheered in their own way, and made jokes after their own fashion. 'God Save the King,' followed by ringing cheers 'For the King,' was given with spontaneous loyalty; and if the 'Martial Age' (as a lame soldier called the 'Marseillaise') went with difficulty, it was a spirited and friendly per-

formance. The English Ambassador and several members of the Embassy staff joined in these Christmas celebrations, and the regular hospital staff, though obviously very tired, was sympathetic and energetic. The chaplain, the doctors, and the nurses have had a busy time for some months ; and they, with the soldiers, are more than weary of the war. But Christmas, in spite of all its brave efforts, has passed us by and left no imprint of its feet. The soldiers, the refugees, and the children remember the rejoicings with various degrees of pleasure or pain ; and the promoters of the rejoicings breathe deep sighs of relief that the effort to be abnormally cheerful is over. People who come over from England to Paris all say that the atmosphere here is so charged with anxiety that they no longer recognise the gay Paris of other days. We, who have not been away at all, do not realise this. We remember the Paris of September, and in comparison the Paris of to-day is almost gay. Yet echoes from September still come to us, and the consequences of those days are still with us. There are many people who still do not feel safe and who cling to the fear that

'They' will come back. There is a girl of my acquaintance who was paralysed with fear during the worst days. She still lies helpless on her bed and her mother is forced to live on charity so that she may nurse her. There are countless stories told whenever people meet who have not seen each other for some time, and strangely enough they do not seem to grow in extravagance as the reality fades into the past. Rather we may say that the tone of those dangerous days is kept low by all who went through them within the gates of the city. One man told us that while there was still danger he met a French officer who had seen a German officer's orders as to what was to be done when they, the enemy, reached Paris. They were to burn the city if there was the least resistance, beginning with the poorer quarters and passing on to the centre if the people still refused to give way. The American Ambassador was asked by the Germans to get rid of all American subjects as they did not wish to be hampered in their movements by having to respect them. The difficult situation of the few English people of position who still remained in Paris may be appreciated

when things came to this point ; and it is not surprising that the clergy, who were the only English officials left at the time, should find their responsibilities weigh heavily upon them, particularly as they found themselves with several thousands of penniless British subjects all looking to them for help and advice, and no money with which to meet their needs. Eventually funds were sent from the Home Government, but in the meantime the *mauvais quart d'heure* had had to be endured. With memories such as these, with poverty and misery always before our eyes, with anxious thoughts for the future, and with the ever-conscious knowledge that many of those we met in daily intercourse before the war will never come back, it is impossible that life in Paris should take on anything but a pale shadow of its former self, and as we watch the 'skirts of the departing year' we are inclined to say with Charles Lamb that we are 'sanguine only in the prospects of other (former) years,' and we 'play over again, for love, the games for which we once paid so dear.'

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